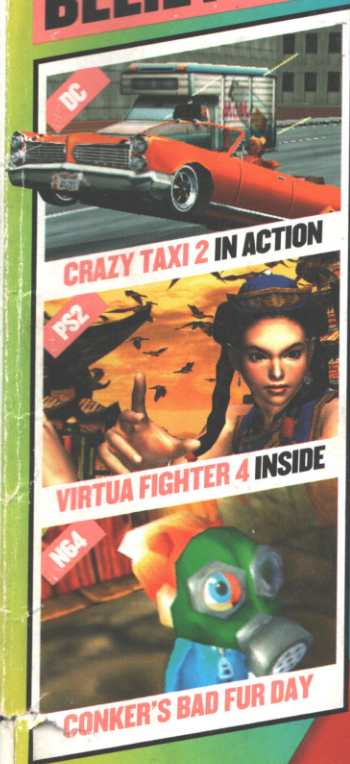


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MARIO

TIME

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PETE
Mmm...

- Operation Flashpoint
- Halo
- Quake 3 Revolution

ALEX
Mmm...

- Mario Advance
- ISS Evo 2
- Quake 3 Revolution



JOHNNY
Mmm...

- Crazy Taxi 2
- Starfighter
- Mario Advance



DEAN
Mmm...

- Game Boy Advance
- Paper Mario
- Daytona USA 2001



JENNY
Mmm...

- Conker's Bad Fur Day
- Pokémon Gold
- Game Boy Advance



STEVE
Mmm...

- Phantasy Star Online
- Mr Driller 2 on GBA
- F-Zero on GBA



LEE
Mmm...

- Conker's Bad Fur Day
- Jungle Book Groove
- Game Boy Advance



LES
Mmm...

- Black & White
- Game Boy Advance
- Conker's Bad Fur Day



PAT
Mmm...

- Super Mario World
- Unreal Tournament on DC
- Mario Tennis on GBC



DAN
Mmm...

- Addam's Family Pinball
- Looney Tunes Space Race
- Super Sprint



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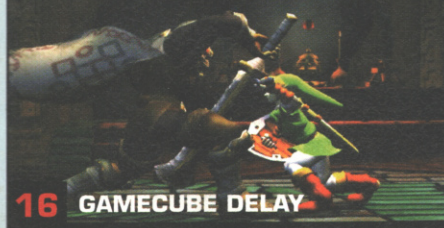
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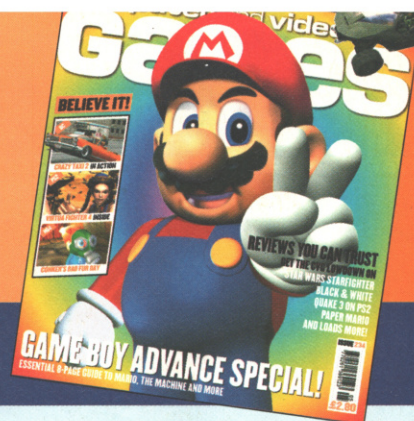
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SOMETHING FOR NOTHING

COVER GIFT

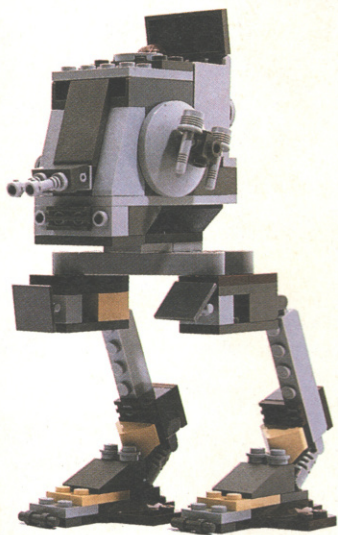
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48 WIN THIS LOT NOW!

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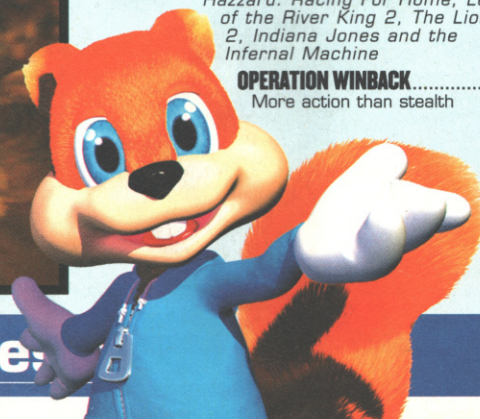
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More action than stealth



ACCESS ALL GAMES

A WHOLE MONTH'S NEW GAMES IN ONE PLACE

HALO

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORM/XBOX

Finally! We've been slathering over this action-shooter since 1999 when Xbox was just a twinkle in Bill Gates' eye and *Halo* was promising to be the Holy Grail of Mac and online PC gaming. One buy-out and much waiting later, and developer Bungie is now aiming to blow the console world away when *Halo* launches with Xbox this autumn. Yes, we've had our first play on it, and yes it's looking very sweet indeed. So take a look at how good creaming alien butt is going to be on Microsoft's mighty machine.

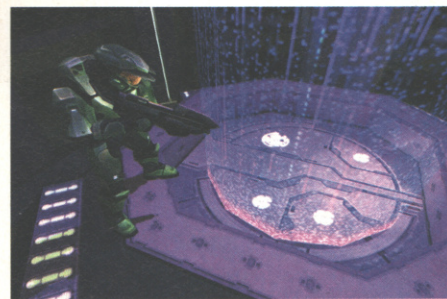
▶ Check the muzzle flash. While playing the out-of-vehicle sections first-person, the Xbox pad rumbles gleefully every time you hit the trigger. Get some!



▶ Spectacular, huh? But controlling this buggy takes some getting used to with the current set-up – right stick to steer and switch camera angle, left to hit to the gas

▶ Later in the game you get to nab the alien Covenant's technology

▶ First-person control is so intuitive the pad did just what we wanted first time



▶ Y!
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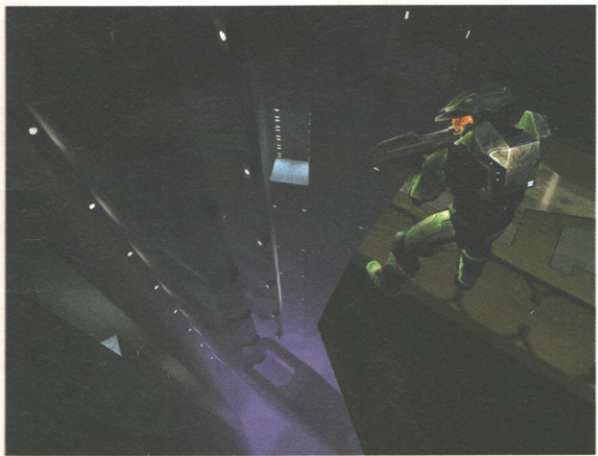


◀ Firefights are frenzied but there's room for a bit of cunning too – enemies look for you where they last saw you, so lure them in then sneak round the back and whack 'em with your rifle butt



▲ The demo we played had only one weapon, a couple of enemy types and no gore, but these guys' death animations rock – one blast from your machinegun and they fly backwards, head-over-heels

▼ Yup, that's instant death down there. All that space and no slow-down though – superb. Interiors are suitably brooding, while outdoor locations are actually rather, er, picturesque



▶ Split-screen sounds cool too – one player driving, the other manning guns. But with a pre-Christmas launch and not much ready to show just yet, we're keeping our fingers crossed nothing slips. As for PC and Mac versions...



ODDWORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORM/XBOX

One of PS2's more original titles turned apple of Xbox's eye, *Munch's* had us chuckling with its bang-on visual gags from the moment we picked up the Xbox joypad – and that was without sound as a new Xbox sound chip is still in development, apparently.



▲ Comic animation central: Munch can loop-the-loop in his chair, while gently nudging the pad stick makes Abe creep



▲ Developer Oddworld Inhabitants is bringing a beautiful, darkly humorous and immersive gameworld to life



▲ Switching between Munch and Abe is crucial for completing tasks, as they both have different skills. That'll be a minefield



▲ Munch is slow and clumsy on land without his wheelchair



▲ *Munch's* promises to be much more than your standard platform action adventure – and visually it's already looking special



AMPED: FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORMXBOX

Freestyle by name and by nature – go where the hell you want across seven resorts in your bid for international boarding fame. Pull mad tricks and spin off jumps and rails.

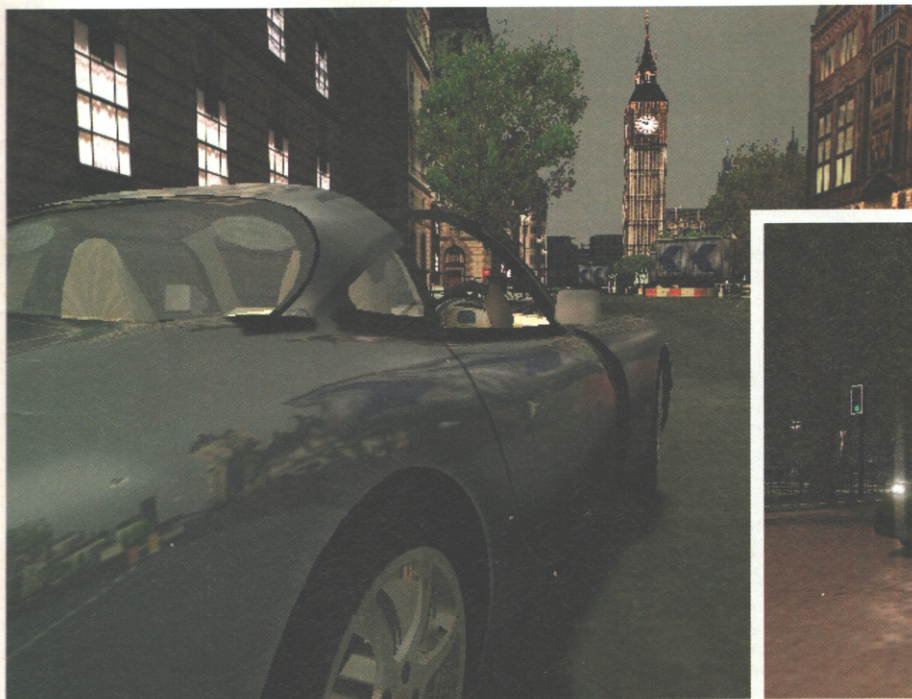
▲ Explore the resorts, looking for the perfect rails and half-pipes to impress snappers with your crazy skills, cutting across tree-covered hillsides littered with 120 runs



▲ You'll earn more exposure depending on which roaming spectators catch your tricks. Beat pro challenges for unlockables



▲ The code we played was early – motion capture will improve collision animations and trees will even drop snow when knocked



CODENAME: PROJECT GOTHAM

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORMXBOX

From the team that brought us *Metropolis Street Racer*, an Xbox racer using the same technology as DC's classic. Though 90% of code will be re-written, kudos is still a key feature

▶ Proving Xbox is easy to develop for; Bizarre had a demo running within weeks

▼ The current 16K polygon count per car is set to rise



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A WHOLE MONTH'S NEW GAMES IN ONE PLACE



AZURIK - RISE OF PERATHIA

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORM/BOX

Action-adventure set in a huge, graphically lush environment which Azurik must explore in his quest to stop a prophecy of doom. Set to be a challenging combat adventure.



▲ Use the elements of fire, water, earth and air in your battles against a multitude of enemies which flock, swarm and even combine into bosses, making it even tougher to discover and exploit their weaknesses. Hopefully Azurik will boast more moves than the similar looking *Soul Reaver*



NIGHTCASTER

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORM/BOX

Ranged combat third-person action-adventure that's slightly reminiscent of PC fantasy fest *The Wheel of Time*. Novice wizard Arran ages and gains more powerful spells during the game.



▲ Expect a blend of spell combat and exploration, NPCs to interact with and subquests to complete. But despite the fantasy theme, *Nightcaster* ain't no RPG. The dual analogue controls mean you move you targeting orb separately to Arran as you scrap it out with reams of enemies in real-time



NFL FEVER 2001

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORM/BOX

No new console would be fit for the American market without one of these, and *Fever* certainly wants to give the *Madden* series a bone-crunching body check. Check the screen behind



▲ Study that helmet. That's the stadium reflected in it. You want more detail? How about the quarterback's eyes looking down the field for open receivers, the look of pain on a player's face when he's at the wrong end of a crunching tackle, or muscles bulging with players' movements

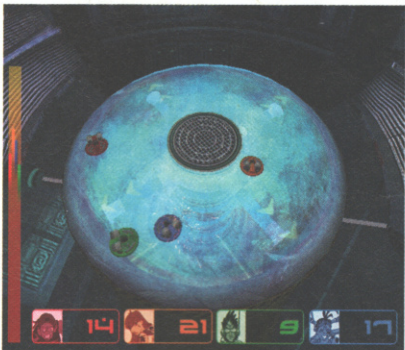
FUZION FRENZY

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORM/BOX

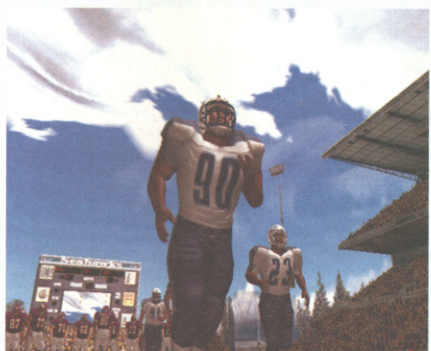
Surprise of Microsoft's Gamestock show, *Fuzion Frenzy* wants to be the party game to end all party games. Futuristic arena challenges tie together 45 mini-games.



▲ This may only look like a *Micro Machines* water level, but that coloured lighting actually ripples on the water while the gulls wheel above. Simple but easy on the eye



▲ Sumo wrestling meets bumper cars on ice – like the other two mini-games we played, you intend to have just one go, yet find yourself still there 20 minutes later



▲ But hey, that ain't enough realism either. Why not go the whole hog and have weather that affects play? Snow accumulates across the field during a game, making players more likely to slide and injure themselves. If even half this comes off, *Fever* should be the sports sim of all sports sims

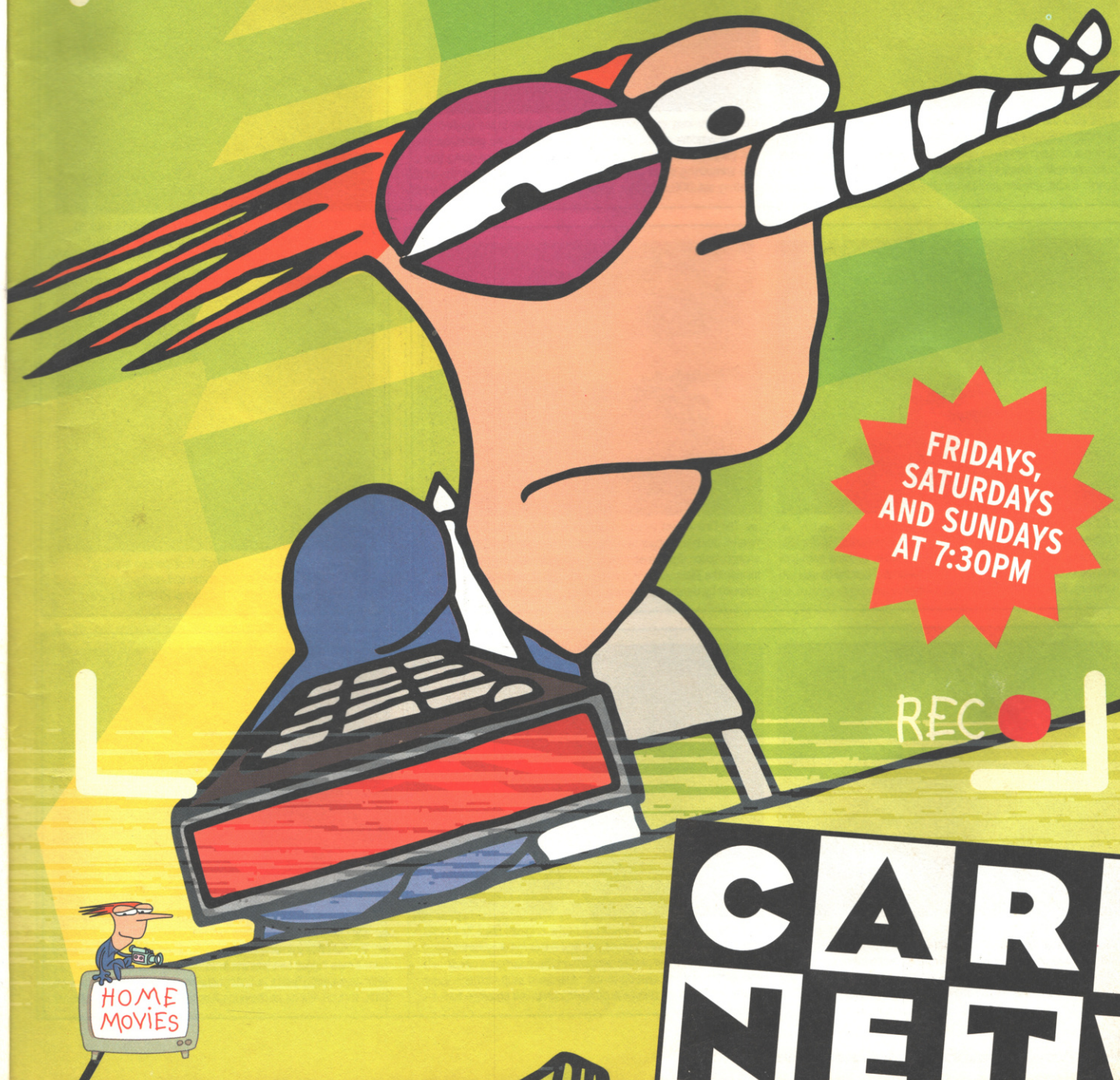
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THE GETAWAY

OUTBGC PLATFORMPS2

Taking a leaf out of GTA's book, this bad boy driving game puts you at the wheel of a getaway car, caning it through scarily realistic settings (like London, shown here) to escape



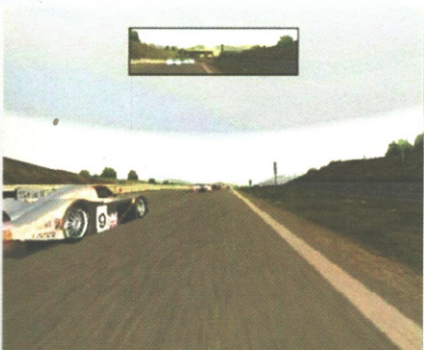
the ever-so long arm of the law. Driving by the rules goes out the window as you do whatever it takes to, er, get away. If it plays half as good as it looks, then at last we're going to see something that's not called *Metal Gear 2* but is worth shelling out 300 notes for a PlayStation 2 to play



LE MANS 24 HOURS

OUTBGC PLATFORMPS2

Top looking racer on PS2 and, if you really have no life, it even lets you race for the full 24 hours in real-time. Now that's hardcore. Not to mention a teensy bit sad



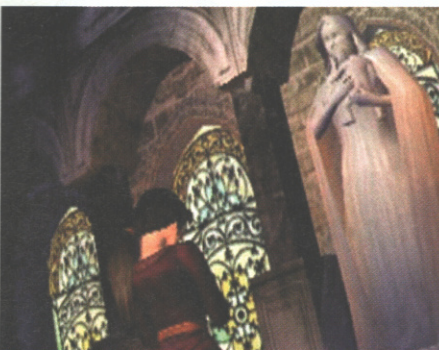
▲ The Dreamcast version featured amazing graphics but was let down a bit by a lack of excitement and not having enough action if you ever took the lead. Hopefully this will be fixed in the PlayStation 2 version, although it could get eclipsed by the up-and-coming *Gran Turismo 3*



SHENMUE 2

OUTBGC PLATFORMDC

Just 'cos Sega ain't making it no more don't mean that the DC isn't in for some serious treats this year. And treats don't come much bigger than the sequel to the awe-inspiring *Shenmue*

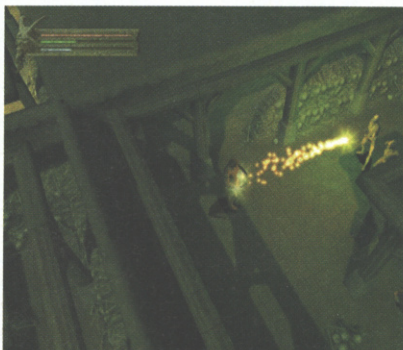


▲ Retaining all the RPG elements of the original, Sega is promising that this will feature more action as well, cutting down on some of the slower sections of the first game which put some people off getting to the really good stuff further on. As you can see, they're pushing the graphics envelope too

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

OUTSEPTEMBER PLATFORMPS2

Both of the *Baldur's Gate* games on PC have sold shedloads, making it one of the top RPGs ever. This PS2 version puts you in control of one character instead of the PC's six



▲ Plenty of hack and slash action, huge levels to explore and heaps of magic spells to cast – depending on which character class you choose



▲ *Eternal Ring* tried to do clever first-person style action, *Evergrace* tried third-person and action oriented, but *Dark Alliance* is the first traditional RPG for the PS2



▲ The character-led storyline nevertheless promises to be just as deep and immersive as the original – and the game is many times bigger, so you won't be finishing this one in a week we reckon. The DC's finest hour may yet be to come. Sadly, though, it'll be at the end of its lifespan



SPIDER-MAN

OUTJUNE PLATFORM/DREAMCAST

Spider-Man, Spider-Man, does whatever a spider can, spins a web any size, gets trodden on and then dies, look out, here comes the Spider-Man. Or something like that



▲ Expect plenty of web-slinging, wall-crawling, bad guy-bashing, Spidey sense-tingling action as the Dreamcast gets its very own version of the PlayStation smash hit. The basics will be the same, although *Tony Hawk's* developer Treyarch will be pulling off some new tricks with the DC's extra power



▲ Expect controls to be just as instinctive as the PlayStation version. Spidey has a huge range of cool moves at his disposal, from crawling up walls, to grabbing baddies from behind and choking them. Despite this, you'll glean most fun from simply slingin' Spidey's web at your assorted foes

CONFLICT ZONE

OUTJUNE PLATFORM/PS2/PC

Real-time strategy rears its head again, with you playing as either GHOST or ICP, hell-bent on wiping out opposition while trying to keep the media happy about your warmongering



▲ You get assigned specialist commanders who will look after certain aspects of the missions for you - if you trust them enough. Sounds interesting



▲ The battlefield is proper 3D and there's no fog of war, so you will be able to see what's going on in the distance. Wonder if you can still tank rush though?



RED FACTION

OUTJULY PLATFORM/PS2

After the multiplayer orientated *Quake 3 Revolution* and *Unreal Tournament*, *Red Faction* is a first-person shooter that has got a solid story-led single player mode, with the multiplayer as extra



▲ You get to cause carnage to humans and scenery - everything takes damage, be it made of flesh or brick. Mint weapons, vehicles and huge, lushly detailed levels promise the kind of first-person shooter experience usually reserved for owners of expensive, high spec PCs



RUN LIKE HELL

OUTOCTOBER PLATFORM/PS2

The developers reckon this is the closest you'll get to playing the action from the *Aliens* movies. So close they've even got the actor who played the android Bishop to appear in the game



▲ They may lack the subtle terror of HR Giger's design for the original *Alien*, but these freaks will still provide plenty of target practice for the trigger happy marine - assuming that you're not heeding the advice given in the title of this one. So long as they haven't got that bloody annoying Newt girl in it

ACCESS ALL GAMES

A WHOLE MONTH'S NEW GAMES IN ONE PLACE



EARTH AND BEYOND

OUTTBC PLATFORMPC

Persistent world RPGs have been around a while now – but Westwood are taking it one step further by having a whole galaxy for you to explore online. It's a sci-fi epic where you can do pretty much whatever you want, when you want, with a cast of thousands of other human players – awesome potential



GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

OUTJUNE PLATFORMPS2

The rush to get every big PC game converted to the PS2 continues apace with this fragfest from the States. Mind you, the PC original was delayed so much it's no surprise the PS2 version almost caught up with it. It was fairly successful on PC, so maybe it'll be worth the wait



ZOO TYCOON

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORMPC

Does what it says on the box – you've already done it with theme parks, rollercoasters, railroads, cities and small banana republics, so this seems logical. Offers both objective-based scenarios and freeplay, with 40 animals and 40 building materials. But we just want to set these lions on the visitors



HIDDEN INVASION

OUTSEPTEMBER PLATFORMPS2

A horror sci-fi adventure where you lead a group of special forces troops to end an horrific alien threat. Mmm, so nothing like Aliens at all then. Enemy AI tricks include them using sneaky shortcuts to cut your troops down in true nightmare style. "They're coming out of the goddamn walls", "Game Over man", etc.



WARHAMMER ONLINE

OUTTBC PLATFORMPC

Real-time strategy with a bit of a difference. You command armies instead of units, and they're all based on the popular table top Warhammer characters. Battles take place on huge battlefields with strict rules as to who can do what. Can it match the likes of Red Alert or Warcraft for sheer fun?



ALONE IN THE DARK

OUTSUMMER PLATFORMGAME BOY COLOR

Yeah, you read it right, this is on the GBC. It may look almost as good as an old PC or PlayStation game, but this is running on the three-year-old handheld. Pocket Studios, the company behind this, have got a few other surprises up their sleeves too, using this technology to bring other star PC games to GBC



GEOFF CRAMMOND'S GRAND PRIX 2000 SERIES

OUTTBC PLATFORMPC

There's hardly a shortage of F1 games, but Geoff Crammond's have always been regarded as the most accurate. This one features advanced weather, better graphics and better handling – but probably won't let you smash marshalls with tyres when you crash. It's also last season's stats, so expect an add-on disc



NASCAR 2001

OUTJUNE PLATFORMPS2

So it's not as well known in the UK as Formula One, but seeing as it's huge in the States, Electronic Arts reckons it's a safe bet to give us a dose of hot NASCAR action anyway. Early signs are impressive for this racer, but they'll have their work cut out for them if they're to win over Europe's F1 loving public



MEDAL OF HONOUR: FRONTLINE

OUTTBC PLATFORMPS2

Classic World War Two first-person Nazi-bashing as the PSone's finest FPS gets its PS2 debut. No details yet as to the plot, but it's a fair bet that you'll be heading up the Resistance or some crack unit, killing German soldiers and blowing stuff up. Which all sounds great to us. Multiplayer? We certainly hope so



MEDAL OF HONOUR: FRONTLINE

OUTTBC PLATFORMPS2

On PC, EA's competitive Return to multiplayer the wings.



TECHNOMANCER

OUTTBC PLATFORMPC

Not all too Technomancer German c enchanter killing in t



DUNGEOMANCER

OUTAUTUMN 2001 PLATFORMPC

Anyone v the Xbox close and beautiful Sort of 6



MEDAL OF HONOUR: ALLIED ASSAULT

OUT/BC PLATFORM/PC

On PC, EA's WW2 shoot 'em up is going to face a lot stiffer competition. Resistance comes in the shape of the upcoming *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* and the *Half-Life* series, while on the multiplayer front *Quake 3* and *Unreal Tournie* are already waiting in the wings. The fight will be long and vicious – hopefully...



TECHNOMAGE

OUT/BC PLATFORM/PC

Not all top-down RPGs have to be as dark and adult as *Summoner*. *Technomage* is a much cuter, sprite-based fantasy adventure from German coders Sunflowers. You play as Melvin the junior enchanter, so expect much puzzle-solving and real-time monster-killing in the quest to save the land of Gothos from destruction



DUNGEON SIEGE

OUT/AUTUMN 2001 PLATFORM/PC

Anyone wanna bet against Microsoft's latest graphics fest getting the Xbox treatment in the near future? Didn't think so. Get up close and personal with your characters as they battle through beautifully detailed landscapes, fighting for all that is true and just. Sort of *Baldur's Gate* meets *Diablo* with steam-powered miniguns



THE SIMS HOUSE PARTY

OUT/MAY PLATFORM/PC

Thankfully unrelated to anything to do with Noel Edmonds and his Blobby household. More addictive and voyeuristic than watching the reality TV of *Big Brother*, this latest add-on for *The Sims* sees your characters in party mode, with plenty of new items and events to introduce them to. Irresistible to the many thousands of Sims fans



RUGBY

OUT/JULY PLATFORM/PS2

So what if it's a game played by men with odd-shaped balls?! At the moment it's one of the few sports that our national team is any good at, so we'll shout about it. Expect *FIFA* levels of playability and a not-too-challenging learning curve for novices, so you can get stuck right in even if you don't know the rules. It's from EA



UNREAL 2

OUT/BC PLATFORM/PC

It may be far off in the distance, but people are already talking in hushed tones about how this will be all-conquering when the Yanks finally get around to releasing the damn thing. Expect the hottest first-person shooter yet, though it should face tough competition from *Quake 4* and *Doom 3* – yup, they're both in development

HOW MANY CAPS DID
TREVOR FRANCIS WIN
PLAYING FOR ENGLAND?



- A 49
- B 45
- ✓ 52
- 1x Pass

2 football STRIP

DAILY SPORT FOOTBALL STRIP

OUT/APRIL PLATFORM/PC

That fine bastion of British journalism, *The Daily Sport* (Johnny's favourite paper) lends its name to a footy quiz game. The rewards are obvious, but if you lose are you going to return the favour? Course not. Oh, and if you're wondering, we were forced to put extra footballs on the pic above 'cos it's a bit risqué



MECHCOMMANDER 2

OUT/JULY PLATFORM/PC

Command and customize a company of up to 16 mercenary mechs from the BattleTech universe, capturing weapons facilities and dropping salvage crews into destroyed enemy mechs. The line-of-sight feature means height gives an advantage – you'll also be better placed for a disabling shot to the head, one of 13 hit zones



EVIL DEAD: HAIL TO THE KING

OUT/MAY PLATFORM/PC

So what if the DC version of this looks like it might suck – surely they'll make its PC big brother awesome, won't they? Hmm? Please? Why won't anyone answer? What are they afraid of? Surely it's not just a quickie port of the DC game? Find out next month when we review it

PLEASE MIND THE G

UK GAMECUBE LAUNCH COMES LAST ON AUNTY NINTY'S LIST OF PRIORITIES - YET AGAIN

This summer will be an awesome time to live in Japan. Not only will you already be able to pop down your local shop and pick up a cheapo Game Boy Advance, but come July you will also be able to join the thronging masses vying to buy a GameCube when it goes on sale. The Americans only have to wait until October before Nintendo's holy grail of gaming hits their shores. But, as the Big N has just confirmed, the poor old UK has to wait until **SPRING NEXT YEAR** before it will allow you to get your hands on a machine. We can feel the frustration mounting already.

THE WAITING GAME

Nintendo claims, "Nintendo GameCube will revolutionise gaming, bringing a whole new dimension to game play for anyone who loves great games". Maybe that should read for anyone who loves to wait for great games. We shouldn't be too surprised though, they did the same to us with N64 - making us wait ages for the release, driving some of us to pay small fortunes to importers for Japanese or American machines and games.

NINTENDO HELPING SONY

We all cheered when Sega finally said it would be bringing its great games to PS2 and now it's nice to see Nintendo helping Sony out.



One of the few Nintendo series that's more popular in the US than in Japan. *Super Metroid* should rock your world when it's released



Woah, it's a Pokémon party. All the gang are here, looking better than ever. The *Pokémon* phenomena lives on with GameCube



Even though Luigi features heavily, is this the new *Mario* game?

further by giving its rival such a huge head start in America and Europe. By the time you finally get your hands on a GameCube, Sony will be revealing its second generation of software like *Metal Gear Solid 2*, which could have as much impact on sales as most games Nintendo could have ready for launch.

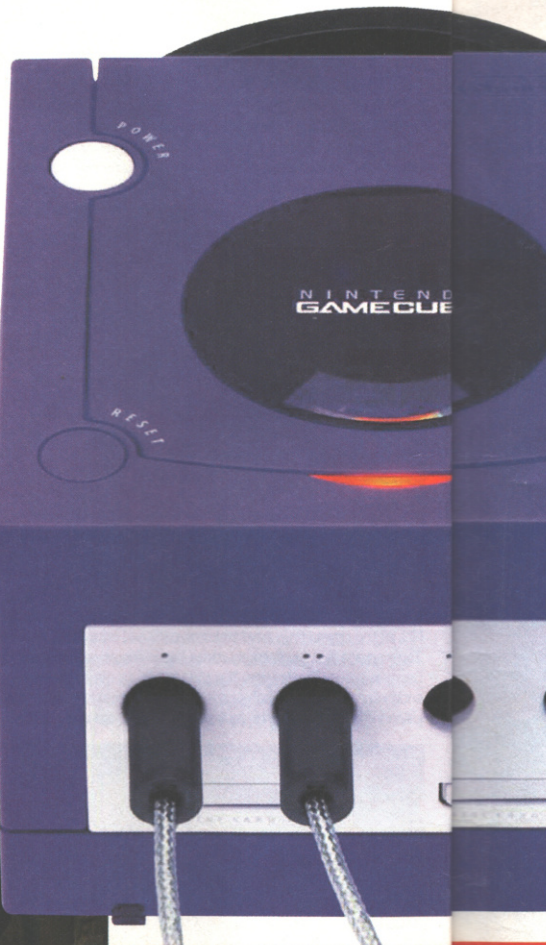
NOW THE GOOD NEWS

The signs are that Nintendo will keep to its promise to make GameCube the cheapest next-gen console around when it is launched. Though no price has been confirmed yet, this means it could be as little as £199 at launch. And for those of us who remember the headaches caused by the prices of N64 games, this time around they'll be cheaper to produce as the games come on proprietary discs rather than carts.

The titles rumoured for launch include a *Mario* game and new versions of *Wave Race*, *1080° Snowboarding* and *Super Metroid*. We've also heard whispers of *Zelda* and *Perfect Dark* games as well. So while Nintendo's announcement means Europe comes last again, it's not all doom and gloom.



Zelda has always ranked highly in terms of gameplay - now it has graphics to die for



EVS REBKONS

Some players are more equal than others, it seems. Japan may be the most important market to Nintendo, yet that's no excuse for making us wait almost a year for the launch of GameCube over here. Thank God we'll have Game Boy Advance before then.

Waiting that long sucks, but then Euro gamers are getting used to sloppy

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WORDSLES ELLIS IMAGESVARIOUS



LEE'S LAB TESTS

GAMING ADD-ONS UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

Heavy rain has hit our peripherals King hard and the leaky lab roof has soiled all his white coats. At least the Prof kept this month's products dry...



PS2000 DIGITAL

PS2

£179

The PS2000 Digital kit will end all your stereo sound woes with meaty bass and crystal-clear treble. Expensive, but tasty. ★★★★★



TOPDRIVE GTO

PS/PS2

£14.99

Cheap and cheerful, it does its job well. The buttons are perfectly placed for most racers, but it needs to be clamped to a table. ★★★



VR12 ANALOG PAD

PS/PS2

£19.99

Third-party analogue joy. The fire buttons feel a bit squidgy at first but are better than pressing down hard on the official pad. ★★★



XPLODER LITE

GB/GBG

£14.99

A real improvement on last year's Xploder GB. The confusing cheat creator is gone and there's loads of cheats and Pokémon codes. ★★★★★



XPLODER CD9000

PSONE

£9.99

Re-issued version of the excellent Xploder cheat CD. Now it doesn't need the memory card dangle thingy. As good as ever. ★★★★★

WIN £100

A TON TO BLOW ON WHATEVER YOUR HEART DESIRES

1 Which one of these is a pilot from *Starfighter*?

- A Nym
- B Nob
- C Kym

2 What does Conker throw at the dung boss to defeat him?

- A Sweetcorn
- B Bog Rolls
- C Klingons

3 In which city is *Crazy Taxi 2* set?

- A San Francisco
- B Birmingham
- C New York

4 Mario Advance on GBA is based on which classic platformer?

- A *Super Mario 2*
- B *Jet Set Willy*
- C *It's A Me, A'Mario*

5 The UK launch of GameCube has been delayed, but until when?

- A Indefinitely
- B Spring 2002
- C Christmas 2010

6 From which game did Lee get the inspiration for his tattoo on page 50?

- A *Tomb Raider*
- B *Final Fantasy 9*
- C *Teletubbies*

7 We're giving away a superb Lego Star Wars AT-ST in Win This Lot Now, but what does AT-ST stand for?

- A All Terrain Scout Transport
- B Alien Television Satellite Transmitter
- C Average Thespian Shakespeare Theatre

8 How many team arena levels does Electronic Arts' PS2 version of first-person frag-fest *Quake 3* boast?

- A 0
- B 6
- C 100

9 What is the name of the lead male character that you can play as in *Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare*?

- A Dick Dastardly
- B Edward Carnby
- C Edward Woodward

10 We liked DC racer *Daytona USA 2001* a lot, but how many stars did CVG score it?

- A 3
- B 4
- C 5

IT'S EASY TO ENTER

Fill in and cut out the entry form below and send it to: Win Some Money 234, Computer and Video Games, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. The first correct entry to be drawn wins, no questions. Make sure your entry is in by May 17

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NAME: AGE: ..

ADDRESS:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Dennis Publishing Ltd may contact you about other offers, or pass your name address or e-mail contact details to other reputable companies whose products and services may be of interest to you. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive such offers ☐

seconds when it comes to console launches – as Sega, Sony and the Big N have proved time and again in the past.

And just to make Euro players all the happier, even Microsoft plans to launch Xbox in the US and Japan this year, but not until early 2002 over here – about the same time as GameCube. Do we have to wait for a European console manufacturer to get treated equally to our US and Japanese cousins? We're not holding our breath...

SCOOP!

THE PLAYERS' BEST FRIEND

SPOT THE DAN

Spot where we've hidden Dan's ugly mug and you could win six Digimon figurines. First to send the correct page number to our usual address marked Spot The Dan wins.



PLANET



Multi Format:

Activision has snapped up the rights to produce games of the upcoming Spider-Man movie, any sequels, plus the new TV series showing in the US soon (and no doubt turning up on Sky One a few weeks after). The games will be coming out on all formats – although no dates have been set yet.

PC

EA has ditched the full 3D sequel to online RPG *Ultima Online*. Instead of wasting resources on a sequel, it's putting all their efforts into expanding the original game with a *Third Dawn* add-on and making the existing online experience more attractive to anyone who hasn't fallen for it yet.

PS2

Classic PC adventure *Escape from Monkey Island* is to join the ranks of PC games getting converted to PS2. The continuing pirate adventures should prove a hit for all those looking for some old skool adventure action.

Multi Format

The Sega fallout continues as more DC titles are snapped up for other consoles. Apart from *Virtua Fighter 4* for PS2, you can now expect *Ecco* and *Headhunter* (the DC's answer to *Metal Gear Solid*) to appear as well.

Xbox

Unreal was a hit on PC, *Unreal Tournament* rocked the world on PC, DC and PS2 – and now Infogrames is talking about a new version for Xbox, *Unreal Championship*. It's going to be a multiplayer frag-fest like *Unreal Tournament*, but with a shedload of new features, plus it will use Xbox's online abilities.

PS2

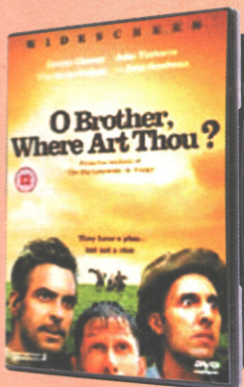
New reaches us that some copies of the *Metal Gear Solid 2* demo packaged with ZOE don't work. As CVG went to press, Konami claimed Sony believed the problem to be hardware related. It's not yet clear how widespread the foul up is, but if your copy doesn't work, return it to the shop or call Sony's support line. To add to Konami's pain, someone forgot to include the BBFC rating on the packaging, so they had to send out loads of stickers to allow shops to actually sell it.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

INCOMING ON DVD THIS MONTH. SLAP 'EM IN YOUR PS2 AND ENJOY

O BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU?

COST: £19.99 CERT: 12
MOMENTUM



STARRING:

George Clooney, John Turturro, Tim Blake Nelson, John Goodman, Holly Hunter

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Those weird and wonderful filmmakers the Coen Brothers present their latest offering, featuring ex-ER star and all-round girly heartthrob Clooney as one of a trio of fugitives from a chain gang, who get into all manner of scrapes while they're on the run.

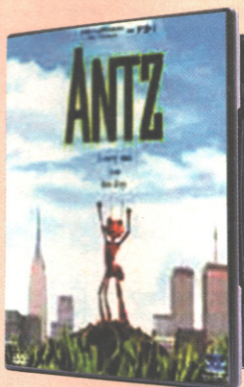
DVD EXTRAS

The trailer and the, erm, ah TV ads (oh yes), plus interviews with cast members (and yes, the leading man does get a lot in) and filmographies. Not a lot of extras, but mostly fun ones.

★★★★

ANTZ

COST: £19.99
CERT: PG
DREAMWORKS



VOICES:

Woody Allen, Sylvester Stallone, Jennifer Lopez, Sharon Stone

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Computer animation takes a trip to the insect world, with Allen as the invertebrate attempting to escape the life of a worker ant. If you thought A Bug's Life was good, then this one, complete with all-star voice cast, is even better.

DVD EXTRAS

There's a trailer; some behind-the-scenes stuff and a bit of interesting insight into how the whole computer animation process actually works, especially when it comes to creating the six-legged stars of the show.

★★★

NUTTY PROFESSOR 2: THE KLUMPS

COST: £19.99 CERT: 12
UNIVERSAL



STARRING:

Eddie Murphy, Janet Jackson

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Former king of Hollywood comedy Eddie Murphy slaps on the fat suit once more to play lard-butt Sherman Klump, as well as the rest of his family. Notable for an, er, 'hilarious' sequence in which a man is attacked by a giant mutant hamster. Bizarre.

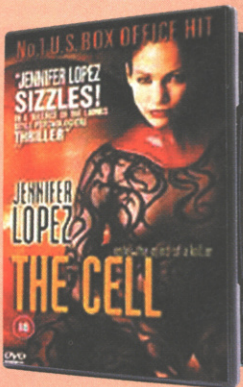
DVD EXTRAS

A bunch of stuff, including a decent location report, insight into the make-up techniques, deleted and extended scenes, and a Janet Jackson music video. All of which almost makes up for the rather lacklustre quality of the movie.

★★★

THE CELL

COST: £19.99
CERT: 18
ENTERTAINMENT



STARRING:

Jennifer Lopez, Vince Vaughn

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Lopez pops some clothes on and plays a shrink who tries to track down a serial killer's latest would-be victim by taking a surreal trip through his mind. All of which sounds not entirely unlike one or two blockbusters from yesteryear. The great special effects partly make up for the silly story.

DVD EXTRAS

Almost an hour's worth of extras, including director's commentary, trailers and some interactive additions too. But if you want to hear Lopez sing, you'll have to buy the CD.

★★★

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to put colour into Black & White



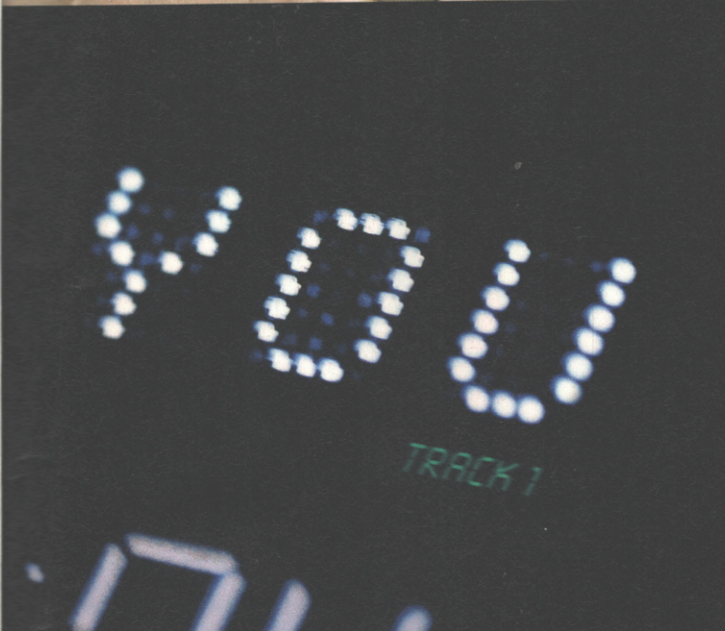
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YOU

TRACK 1



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Go to sky.com/reachforthesky or call 0845 200 8672*
and discover how our Reach For The Sky Awards
can help you do what you like.

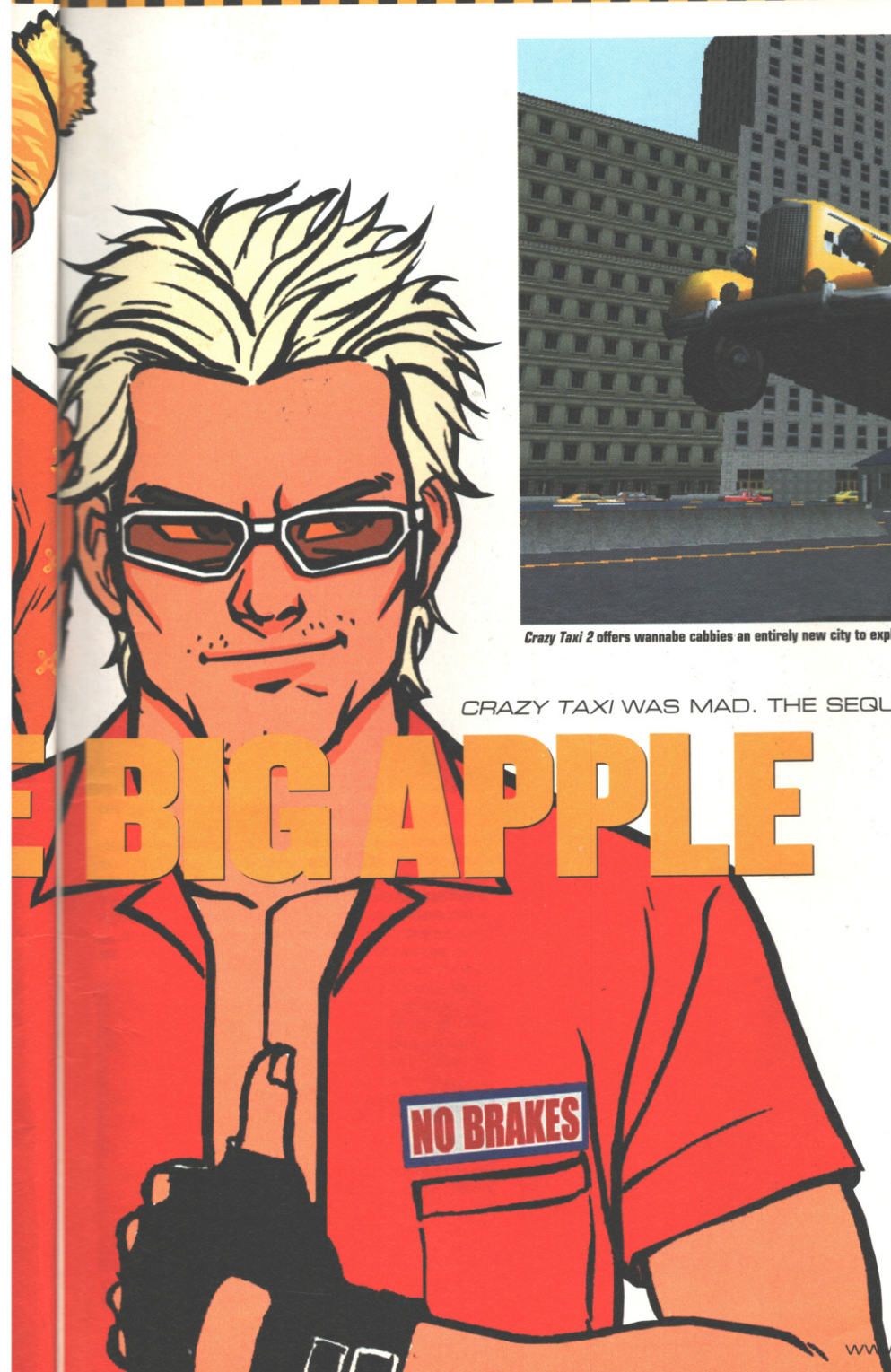
reach for the sky
see what you can be

sky

*calls charged at local rate, please ask permission from whomever pays the bill.

IN THE SHOPS SOON





Crazy Taxi 2 offers wannabe cabbies an entirely new city to explore. Moving from West coast to East, it's time to live it up in the Big Apple

CRAZY TAXI WAS MAD. THE SEQUEL IS A ONE-WAY RIDE TO BEDLAM

WORDS **JOHNNY MINKLEY** SCREENSHOTS **SEGA**

CRAZY TAXI 2

OUT **JUNE/JULY** FORMAT **DC**

So you think your Dreamcast's running out of gas? Think again, 'cos one of DC's finest games to date has spawned a super-slick sequel, this time making the big leap from the West coast to the East. Whilst PS2 owners are only just on the verge of experiencing the fun-loving 'Frisco fare frenzy of the original, DC owners have bigger fish to fry.

We're headed straight for the city that never sleeps, folks. That's right, the land of a million fares, where the streets are paved with golden opportunity for those privileged with The Knowledge. Time is ticking away, and there's fares to be had, so without further ado, let's switch on the meter and go make some kerr-azy money...

HARSH BUT FARE

OK kids, time for a quick lesson in semantics. Did you know that 'taxi' is one of the few words understood the world over, whatever the language or culture? Now, what that means to you and me is that every time somebody shouts out "taxi!", be it up a tree, in a cave, in the middle of a desert, or possibly even in near orbit, you can bet your bottom dollar that some crafty swine will have his radar tuned in. Before you know it, the magical vehicle with the glowing, golden light swoops down from the heavens, eager to serve your every travelling whim. Unless you're in central London

when it's raining, you're soaked to the skin and really need a ride. Not that there's a London level (now that'd be just too crazy).

Thus, the competition's hot, and only the hardcore will survive. *Crazy Taxi 2* leaves behind the relatively chilled vibe of the West coast streets, hurling you mercilessly into the raging hotbed of claustrophobic chaos that is downtown Manhattan. If you reckon you were pretty flash at *Crazy Taxi*, then you're in for one hell of a shock. Let's see how tough you are now, sonny.

DASH 'N' GRAB

Whilst retaining the essential feel and look of the original, *Crazy Taxi 2* gives you a whole new city to explore – and explore it you must. You're presented with two options for the main game, Big Apple or Small Apple. The latter is a slimmed-down, more focused experience, using a smaller area of New York to provide an intense arcade experience that's at once both a gentle initiation for novices, and a hardcore dash 'n' grab for experts.

Most of your time will be spent in the Big Apple, however, which presents NYC in all its immense glory. Just spending time driving across the city was enough to convince us of the scale of the playing area – it just seems to keep going on and on. Much effort has been taken to provide a more realistic and recognisable environment, and whilst not in the same league as *Metropolis Street Racer*, *Crazy Taxi 2* does provide a fairly accurate account of New York. Therefore, many of the landmarks that make the city famous have been included, from the welcome greenery of Central Park, to the avant-garde styling of the Guggenheim art gallery; from the unforgettable symbol of the Statue of Liberty, to the majestic expanse of Brooklyn Bridge. If only you had time to chill out and do the touristy thang.

THE KNOWLEDGE

The sheer size of the city means it will require much dedicated play to learn the ins and the outs and all the shortcuts, emphasising the sort of skills essential to cabbies in the real world. The game has also become less linear in that, whereas before you could pretty much travel in a straight line, following the arrow to reach



Don't expect any easy rides this time around. New York is a complex city that's layout must be learned if you're gonna hit the jackpot

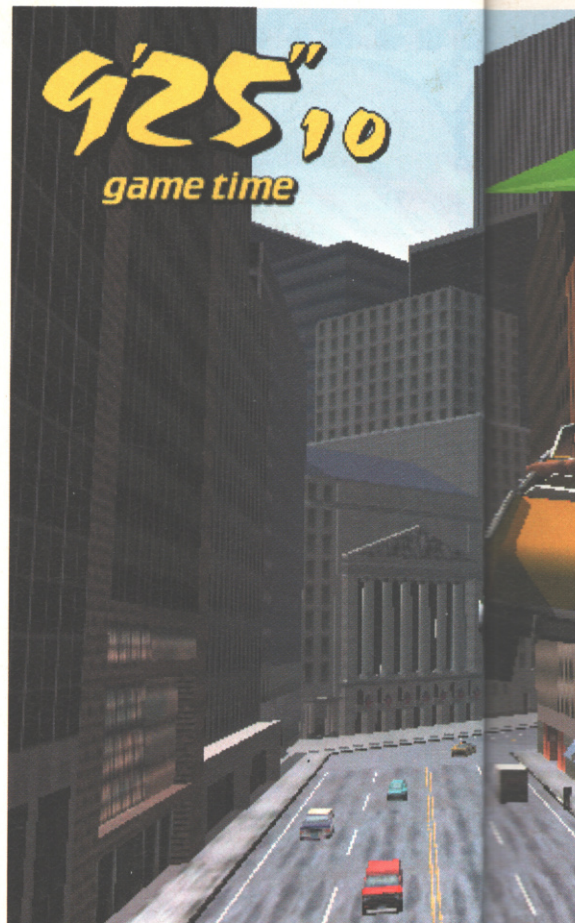
your destination, now it's frequently the case that the arrow is pointing straight at a huge building, so quick thinking and an alternative route are required. God forbid a taxi driver in the real world would take anything other than the shortest route, so don't make that mistake yourself. Think of your customers, people.

THE MORE THE MERRIER

The extra directional nous you require is compounded by a further subtle yet effective change: multiple drop-offs. In *Crazy Taxi*, you only picked up one customer at a time, the single destination allowing you to focus your efforts. In the sequel, however, stopping for more than one customer at once is a regular occurrence, and once in your cab, multiple destinations are required before you get the full wonga. This can turn in a heart-pumping race against the clock. Among the group fares on offer are a bunch of slightly demented mime-artists and a clutch of cute cheerleaders. Alas, it's still not possible to violently mow innocent pedestrians down – maybe next time. *Sigh*.



There's an entirely new cast of drivers to get behind the wheel with, though don't be surprised if a few familiar faces are tucked away inside



HOP, SKIP AND JUMP

Over and above these tweaks and enhancements, one profound change has been made to the game mechanics, which totally redefines the way you approach your ride: the Crazy Jump. Not to be confused with the first mini-game in the original's Crazy Box section, the Crazy Jump is enacted in the main game with a quick press of a button, bouncing your vehicle several feet into the air. This is important for several reasons. First, the streets of NYC are extremely congested, with dense traffic covering the city. Instead of getting stuck in a jam and sinking into road rage, however, a quick tap on the Y button will see you soar over cars and even lorries, as you gracefully scythe a path through the traffic.

Secondly, it allows you to access higher levels. This dramatically increases the range of shortcuts available to you, allowing you to save valuable seconds by nipping across the roof of a building, or craftily hopping over a fence. This feature works so well that after a few plays you'll wonder how you ever managed to live without it.

RAG AND BONE, MAN

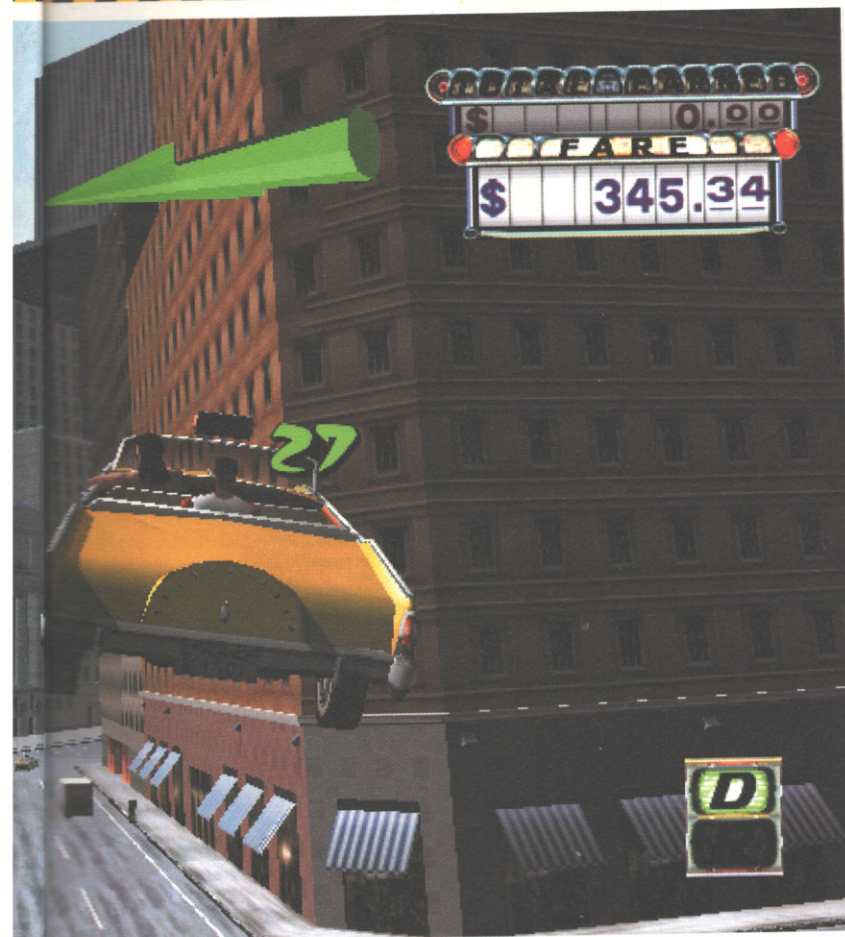
One of the coolest features of the original was Crazy Box Mode, a series of off-the-wall mini-games that really tested your driving skills and gave you the opportunity to set and beat your own records. This section returns with a vengeance in the sequel, under the guise of Crazy Pyramid.

Though we weren't able to see any of the stages, as none have been finalised as yet, there's set to be a whopping 15 to get your teeth into. And you can bet your granny they'll be totally mad and

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Who needs the road anyway? The Crazy Jump is the coolest and most profound addition to the already top gameplay

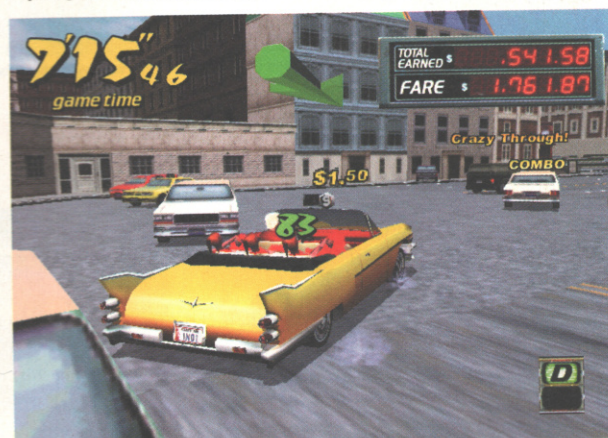
make full use of the new jumping ability of the cars. You can pretty much also guarantee there'll be a host of cool secrets stuffed in there too – we've heard rumours that on top of the all-new cabbie line-up, you may well be able to unlock a few old favourites. Furthermore, instead of the secret cycle-rickshaw of the first game, *Crazy Taxi 2* will apparently feature a classic, Steptoe and Son-style horse and cart. All together now, "dun, dun, da-di-da..."



CT featured two separate cities, but *CT2* offers two versions of New York: the vast Big Apple, and the lesser, more focussed, Small Apple



Multiplayer was given strong consideration, but in the end, Sega dropped the idea in favour of putting their efforts into fashioning the ultimate one-player experience. Hmm



Expect a similarly cheesy soundtrack, with more mullet rock from the likes of The Offspring

DEJA VU?

The version we played is still quite early but it looked pretty flash, with colours as bold and brash as ever, though it would have been nice to be able to drive around at night for once. There's a fair amount of pop-up at the moment, but hopefully that should be ironed out by the time of release. Another criticism at present is that, despite the extra features, it's still very similar to the original,

and only time will tell if they can add enough new stuff to make this an unique experience.

Most disappointing is that, after the promise of a four-player mode, it now looks like we'll have to settle for one-player. Bah! Come on Sega, there's still time, don't let us down. Apart from those niggles, *CT2* looks set to be a summer sizzler, with more fun than you could squeeze in the boot of an estate.



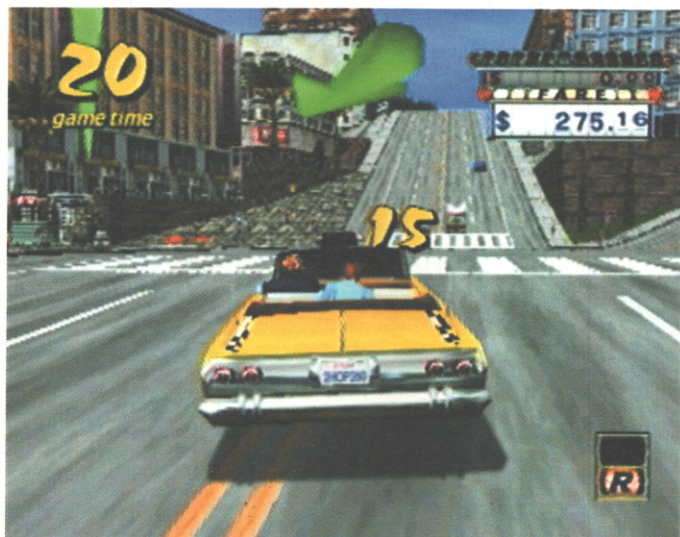
Graphics haven't improved a great deal, but the developers would rather focus on making a great new game – which is fine by us

CVG RECKONS

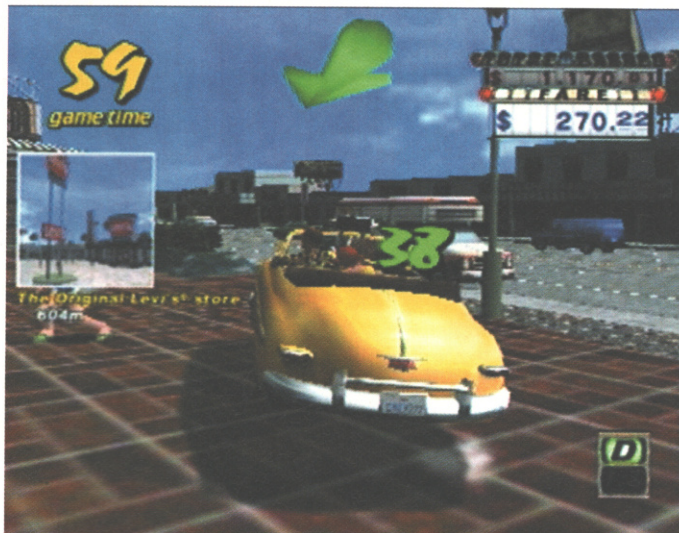
Crazy Taxi 2 is guaranteed to be frantic, fun-packed fare, showing there's plenty of life in the DC yet. Let's hope the final version offers enough to warrant shelling out another 40 smackers.

END

IN THE SHOPS SOON



The PS2 version should be indistinguishable from the Dreamcast original – which means it'll look cool



Try as hard as you like. Then try again. You still won't be able to mow down innocent pedestrians. Bah!

ALL HAIL THE FARE KING!

AT LAST, THE PS2 GETS A DOLLOP OF DREAMCAST MAGIC

WORDS JOHNNY MINKLEY SCREENSHOTS SACCLAIM

CRAZY TAXI

OUTSPRING 2001 FORMAT PS2

It's criminal that the Dreamcast didn't succeed. With arguably the finest range of genuinely groundbreaking, triple-A games of any current console, it's a tragic mystery to many. There are, of course, important reasons for this failure, but they exist on a higher level than the games, and for the average DC-freak who knew the truth,



In spite of the extensive TV campaign, people still refused to belt up

recent weeks have been a period of mourning. Thank God, then, that although the hardware will gracefully disappear from shop shelves towards the end of the year, the immortal soul of the games will live on, reborn on each major format. Sweet.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

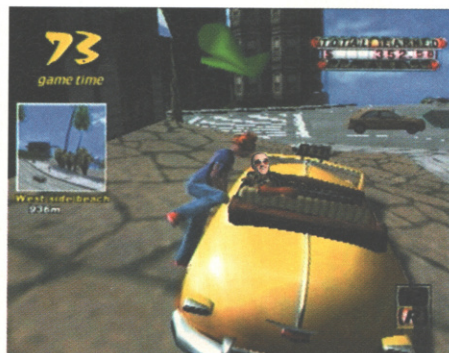
DC owners have long had the pleasure of being acquainted with the brilliant *Crazy Taxi*, a frenetic, high-speed, fare-grabbing extravaganza that more than lives up to its title. PS2 owners will shortly get to experience the thrills and spills for themselves, with the forthcoming release of this straight port of the DC version.

This is far from a bad thing, however, as the original is such a brilliant game and all-round package, containing a host of hilarious, off-the-wall bonus levels that provide a stiff challenge for even the most hardened of gamers. Added to this are two huge cities to explore in the main game, full of shortcuts and secrets that will take dedicated play to find.

ROAD HOG

The core gameplay consists of driving around a city, picking up customers, then dropping them off at their desired destination in the quickest time possible. The faster you go, the more money you make; run out of time and it's game over. It's that simple.

Yet the game is designed with such precision that experts will be able to carve out stunning totals through a combination of stunts, knowledge of city layouts and pure driving skill. You'll need to suss out every shortcut if you want to bag the big money.



Being a taxi driver has its perks – naturally, all the ladies love you

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

Graphically, the PS2 shouldn't have too much of a problem replicating the DC version, and from what we've seen, it's well on course to being a perfect conversion. That means that you'll get all the cool voice-overs, plus frenzied rock music from the likes of The Offspring and Bad Religion raging away behind the roar of the engine. The temptation to headbang frantically is almost too much to resist.

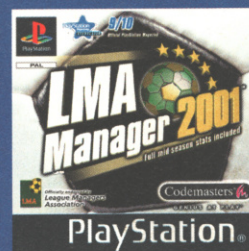
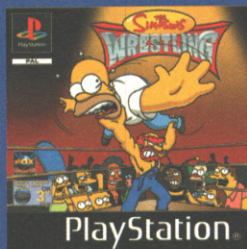
This is shaping up to be one cool game. Anyone used to the DC version will take a little time to adjust to playing with the PS2 pad, but novices should get to grips with the excellent control system in no time at all. PS2 owners have been crying out for games of this quality, and now Sega is on board, hopefully we'll begin to see such wonderful originality on a more frequent basis.

GVG RECKONS

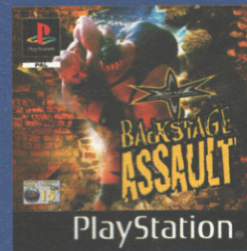
PS2 owners finally get to see what all the fuss was about. This should rock just as hard on PS2 as it did on DC.

END

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Virtua Fighter was the daddy of 3D beat 'em ups but has since lost out to the likes of *Tekken* and *Soul Calibur*. But looking at these mammoth shots, the *Fighter* could be back on top very soon

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4

OUTSUMMER (ARC) WINTER (PS2) FORMAT ARCADE/PS2

When Sega's departure from the hardware market was first announced, the cries of disbelief could be heard across the gaming community. Grown men relapsed into early childhood and cried inconsolably as there would be no more Dreamcast to play Sonic games on. But when the dust finally settled and the unsubstantiated rumour-mongering dried-up, the tears were wiped away when Sega announced its games would now appear on all formats. And if *Virtua Fighter 4* on PS2 is anything to go by, the Phoenix that has risen from Dreamcast's ashes will be laying some solid gold eggs.

OHMYGOD!

We knew *Virtua Fighter 4* was coming quite a while ago, but nothing could have prepared us for these stunning shots of the arcade version we got hotwired over straight from Japan. When we first clapped eyes on them people started jumping around like crazed loons, dribbling all over themselves with raw excitement. And if you're anything like us you'll be acting in a similarly deranged manner as you pore over these phenomenal images.

And though your heart may sink at the sight of the UK release date, at least you'll be able to nip to your local arcade this summer to satisfy your fighting lust.

PHOENIX FROM THE FLAMES

SEGA COMES OUT FIGHTING WITH THIS AWESOME BEAT 'EM UP

WORDS JOHNNY MINKLEY SCREENSHOTS SEGA

SEGA POWER

Developed by AM2 and Yu Suzuki, *VF4* will be one of the first games to make use of the stunningly powerful Naomi 2 board, which is four times as meaty as the Naomi 1 board the DC is built around. In simple terms, this architecture will be able to produce some of the most incredible, detailed and realistic graphics ever seen in a videogame. *VF4* is sure to be the most visually impressive beat 'em up anywhere, if these shots are anything to go by, and though the PS2 can't match

the raw power of Naomi 2, if anyone can squeeze the best out of a machine, it's Sega.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

VF4 was demoed for the first time a few weeks ago in Tokyo. Footage from two stages was shown and that was enough to convince onlookers they were viewing something very special indeed. *VF4* is a proper sequel to *VF3*, instead of an update like *Tekken Tag*, and goes back to its roots. The 'evade' button of *VF3* has been



The snow effects on this stage are nothing short of colossal. You feel frozen just looking at it



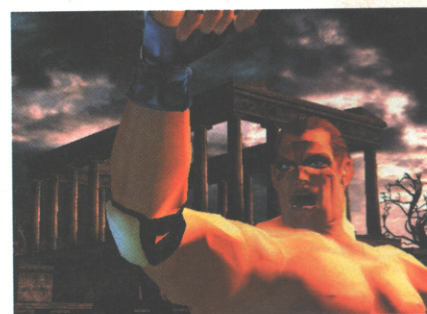
The return of the classic three button system of the original *Virtua Fighter* is a welcome change



When you see those birds flapping past in the background it's absolutely mental. And the bird in the foreground doesn't look half bad either



You can recognise some of *Shenmue* in the facial detail here



All the familiar faces are in there, as well as a couple of newbies

scrapped in favour of the original punch, kick and defence three-button set-up of the first two versions.

It is Yu Suzuki's wish that this will make the game instantly more accessible to all players, but rather than simplifying things, it seems *VF4* will employ free 16-way movement in the same way *Soul Calibur* does. What the demo did show, was an all-new parrying system that looks incredibly effective yet graceful.

BRAND NEW TWO

VF4 will contain the same roster of characters from the previous versions with a couple of new ones chucked in: a female, and a monk-like male. The whole gang will be

much more lifelike than before, and thanks to the added power of Naomi 2, their actions will have a more realistic effect on the opponent and the surroundings.

For example, in the demo's snow stage, wherever fighters tread they leave new footprints, and if they slide, snow is pushed aside and powder is flung into the icy air. It really does look the business.

THE FIGHT IS ON

VF was the original 3D beat 'em up, but has since acquired stiff competition in the likes of *Tekken* and *Soul Calibur*. But this version could well reassert the *Virtua* dominance, heralding a new age for the beat 'em up.

Though there is much to be done, and in spite of the relatively little we've seen so far, Yu Suzuki's genius is undoubted, and it would take a very foolish man indeed to bet against this being anything other than completely awesome. Watch this space, kids.

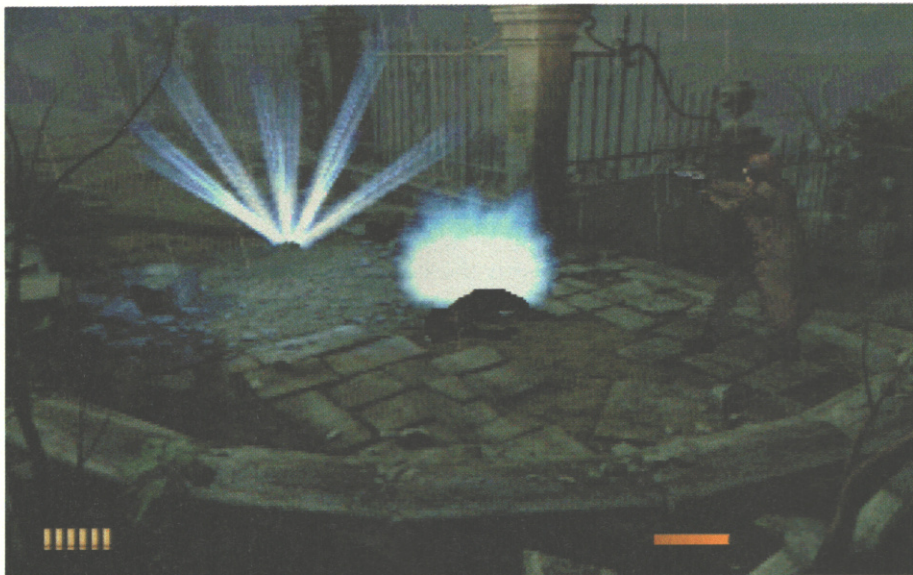
GVG RECKONS

Surely a masterpiece in the making. Long live Sega.

END

IN THE SHOPS SOON

WHAT TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES ARE LIKE TO PLAY



The shadow creatures that inhabit Shadow Island are afraid of the light. They also don't like being blasted much either. Burn their eyes!

ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE

OUTAUTUMN 2001 FORMATS PC, DC, PS2

We all have our fears and phobias. For our editor Alex it's the thought of being in a high place, with the wind whipping around his milk-bottle legs. Pete flaps his arms and shrieks like a girl at the sight of a wasps' nest, and Les blubs like a baby at the mention of a man in a clown suit. People's minds are strange places.

But for most of us, the biggest scares we've experienced are when we're on our own, disoriented and immersed in darkness. Our heartbeat quickens, our eyes peer through the murky blackness trying to identify any recognisable shapes, finding only twisted and distorted outlines instead. You could be in a gothic mansion, a supermarket or your kid brother's nursery room and it wouldn't matter – take away the light and Mr Fear soon comes calling.

FLASHLIGHT THRILLS

The great thing about *Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare* is that right from the start the game captures this feeling perfectly. After crash landing on the remote Shadow Island, our heroes Aline and Camby both tremble edgily as they begin to explore the woods and the mansion they find there.

You will share in the duo's trepidation as they attempt to piece together their individual mysteries. You will inspect every inch of every screen with your flashlight, searching for clues and objects while trying to keep those vicious mutants at bay. It's a feeling that, darkened room or not, will have your nerves frayed within minutes of starting the game. You'll definitely want to play this with someone else in the room to keep you company.

STOCK UP ON BATTERIES. A FLIMSY FLASHLIGHT IS YOUR ONLY WEAPON AGAINST THE FEAR
IN THIS, THE RETURN OF THE ORIGINAL SURVIVAL HORROR GAME

TERROR BY TORCHLIGHT

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS LEE SKITTRELL

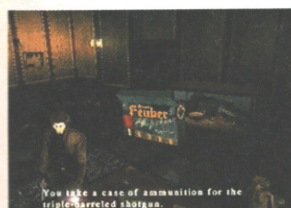




His fixed gaze send shivers down the spine... On the table is a map of the



The maps are clear and simple. Nice



Luckily, ammo and supplies lie around

DRAMATIC DOWNSIDE

Given the instant atmospherics, it's disappointing to find that the terror in *AITD* seems to dwindle as you progress. That initial sense of something evil lurking just around the corner works brilliantly until you see your first shadow creature.

It is true they look horrific, but the tension prior to meeting your first ghoul is simply not milked for long enough. The fact the enemy creatures weren't all that clever in our preview version didn't help, but even once tweaked we doubt they'll generate the kind of fear and terror the developer is aiming for.

TERROR - NOT HORROR

So once the initial sense of fear abates you're left with what looks like will be an engaging, if fairly generic survival horror - or as Infogrames prefers, survival terror - adventure. The standard *Resi*-style puzzles are there, but the developer has decided to keep them simplified so they don't present any major problems to you advancing through the story.

Combat too is pretty standard fair and while blasting zombies with a shotgun is good fun, it hardly pushes the boundaries of the genre like *Parasite Eve II* did. For the latest instalment in the game series that started the whole survival horror genre, it's a shame there's not a little more depth to these battles.



Your heroes climb stairs and hop onto ledges in real-time. Clever



AITD features some pretty nice set-pieces like this section where a ravenous alligator leaps up at you from the drink. Make good use of Carnby's auto-aim to kill it



Les's bedroom has been painstakingly recreated in the game

STIFF COMPETITION

AITD's graphic engine is gob-smacking and creates some incredible lighting effects. Peering round with your flashlight not only looks great but is actually fundamental to the gameplay as objects can only be noticed under the glare of a torch. The smaller shadow creatures can be fended off with light too so



Unarmed Aline spends a lot of her time running from beasts

you'll be thankful for Duracell and those Everlast batteries when you run out of ammo in a room crawling with nasties.

AITD should be a decent survival horror, but faces stiff competition on PS1 from the *Res Evil* series, not to mention the more genre-busting *Dino Crisis 2* and *Parasite Eve 2*. On DC, PC and GBC, though, it'll probably stand out much better.

EVG RECKONS

The story is strong, the action solid and the torch effects stunning. If they can get the fear factor right, *AITD* could well be worthy of your cash.

END



This chap is in a mess. Help him by stealing his keys! Mwa-ha-hahl



Failing a quick skill test results in you choking on poison gas and having to shoot through this nasty green haze



Hello sailors! Hope your trigger finger is ready for action



Shoot the terrorists and don't harm the civilians in training

SHOOT TO THRILL

PROVES THE DREAMCAST HAS STILL GOT SOME FIREPOWER IN RESERVE

WORDS&SCREENSHOTS ALEX HUHTALA

CONFIDENTIAL MISSION

OUT MAY FORMAT DC

First rule of being a secret agent? Find yourself a worthy arch-enemy. James Bond had plenty, all with a master plan to take over the world. And in *Confidential Mission* you'll find hundreds of adversaries, all lurking behind bits of scenery waiting for their moment to leap out and take a cheap shot at you.

What have you got for protection? Just a simple handgun with six bullets in the clip – doesn't sound like it's going to be enough, but with a keen eye and lightning fast reflexes, it might just be. It should be, you're a member of the CMF (Confidential Mission Force) and you've got to save the world with your lightgun.

LIGHT-GUN FANTASTIC

Despite the popularity of *House of the Dead 2* it's been more than a year since we've seen a gun game on Dreamcast. But the wait may have been worth it as only months after its arcade debut, *Confidential Mission* has been given a very slick looking Dreamcast makeover. Lucky us.

You're the good guy. You play either Howard Gibson or Jean Clifford, a pair of CMF agents tasked with sorting this whole mess out. Gibson is a ringer for our very own Mr Bond, whereas Clifford is a virtual Gillian Anderson. Quite who is trying to take over the world this time is unclear. Suffice it to say, whoever it is and whatever their plan, they have a veritable army of guards for you to blast through.

EXHIBIT A

First stop on the globetrotting adventure that follows is a museum. Starting with the dawn of man exhibit, followed by a



All hell breaks loose in the museum as terrorists disguised as security guards try to take you down. Better plug Mr Pie Eater here first

HOWARD
0070475



Some of the boss battles are a tad on the tricky side. It may seem a bit of a tall order to take out a tank with a poxy pistola, but someone's got to do it and you'll just have to keep plugging away

brief saunter across the courtyard and then a visit to the Egyptian rooms. This is no school trip to the Natural History Museum though, because armed goons, soldiers and men in black suits will all be taking pot-shots at you as you chase someone who's made off with top-secret documents.

TARGET ACQUIRED

CM shares a number of similarities with both the *Virtua Cop* and *Time Crisis* series. When multiple enemies appear on screen, coloured targets indicate which enemy will fire first.



Shoot grenades chucked at you in mid air for good results

Green will be last to fire, yellow will be quicker but if the target indicator is red, you're in trouble. Enemies like to appear in large groups so it's a good job they usually require single shots to remove them. But if you're not quick enough on the trigger, they'll take aim, fire and then duck behind scenery ready to leap out and attack again.

ROUGH JUSTICE

Make no mistake *Confidential Mission* is played at a very fast pace, with barely a second to recover between attacks. But to



The enemies boast bigger toys the further you progress

rack up the big scores, you've got to show some dead-eye accuracy as the the Justice Shot system from *Virtua Cop* makes an appearance here too. So to get mega points you have to try and hit enemies in their gun hands. Nice.

MINIGUN GAMES

Other high points include skill challenges and minigames that punctuate the action such as when you have to block air vents before a timer reaches zero to prevent our heroes from being gassed. Mess up and it's a nasty detour for you. Get it right and your progress will be all the easier.

Confidential Mission looks set to be a winner, providing a real arcade experience with a few bonus home modes thrown in for good measure. If you've already got *House of the Dead 2* and a lightgun you'll definitely want to add it to your collection when it's released this May.

CVG RECKONS

Shaping up to be a near faultless conversion of a great arcade shooter.

END

ARE TWO HEADS BETTER THAN ONE?

MIND-BENDING MULTIPLAYER MADNESS

KURI KURI MIX

OUTLATE APRIL FORMATPS2

OK. Bet you thought you were clever when you could pat your head and rub your tummy at the same time, eh? Then you learned to juggle a few balls and thought you were ready to join the Chinese State Circus, right? You haven't played *Kuri Kuri Mix*.

MIND MELT

Kuri Kuri Mix really separates the Torville and Deans from the Carlton Palmers. It's a one to four-player, action/puzzle game where you negotiate a variety of obstacles against the clock.



In four-player you each share half a joypad. No squabbling, now



The look is very cartoony and some of the levels are bonkers

The twist here is that in one-player, you must guide two characters simultaneously on opposite sides of the vertically-scrolling screen.

The emphasis is on cooperation as each character must perform certain tasks on their respective side for the other to progress. Control is one analogue stick per character, with the shoulder buttons on the relevant sides being used for jumping and actions. This will mess your head up guaranteed.

TERRIBLE TWINS

Other games have used twin stick controls before but *KKM* is in a hardcore league of its own. That said, it seems to work well, and once you get your head around it, it's a whole lot of fun.

WORDS JOHNNY MINKLEY SCREENSHOTSEMPIRE



Controlling two characters can bring on brainfreeze

There's also much fun to be had in multiplayer, and four players only need two pads, each using one half. With a series of themed, cartoony worlds, and lots of secrets, this could turn out to be a surprise hit.

EVG RECKONS

This plays tough as old boots but with fun in spades.

END

FUNK THE DUNK

BASKETBALL JUST GOT A WHOLE LOT COOLER

WORDS&SCREENSHOTS MINKERS



As you can see this is a perfect representation of how high a human being can jump



The players all look pretty convincing



Defence is as important as attack



All your favourite teams are in there

NBA STREET

OUTJUNE FORMATPS2

NBA Street, much like *NBA Hoopz*, gives a wide birth to the more serious side of basketball, focussing instead on providing a furious, flamboyant, three-on-three dunk-fest, where players are rewarded not just for scoring, but for the style of execution.

SLICK TRICKS

The game is split into various modes of play. There's a helpful tutorial mode with the game pausing and unpausing to allow you to practice certain moves. Hold the Court is a straightforward, first-to-21 battle, whereas Show Off mode involves teams trying to outdo each other with audacious ball-skills. Most interestingly is the City Court Mode, that hits you with various challenges, including ker-razy end-of-level bosses.

SLICK TRICKS

Presentation's looking pretty sweet at the moment, and the players bear a good resemblance to their real-life counterparts. Some o' dat street vibe iz provided courtesy of cheesy, colloquial on-court banter and nice squeaky trainer effects.

Gameplay is fun thanks to the simple, responsive controls: alongside the pass/shoot buttons is a trick button which can be used with the shoulder buttons to bust some fancy moves. It's all very *NBA Jam*, and is a hoot in both one and two-player modes; let's just hope there'll be some depth to keep it going.

EVG RECKONS

Good fun with a question mark over longevity.

END



COLLECT 25 NEW Pokémon Tazos[®]



Nintendo

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SHEEP, DOG 'N' WOLF

OUT JUNE FORMATS PS2, PC

It's not often that a hero with a big red nose, floppy ears and an unhealthy fondness for dead sheep gets compared to Solid Snake from *Metal Gear Solid*. Step forward, Ralph Wolf, cunning star of *Sheep, Dog 'n' Wolf*, the world's first agricultural sneak 'em up.

CROUCHING SHEEP, HIDDEN WOLF

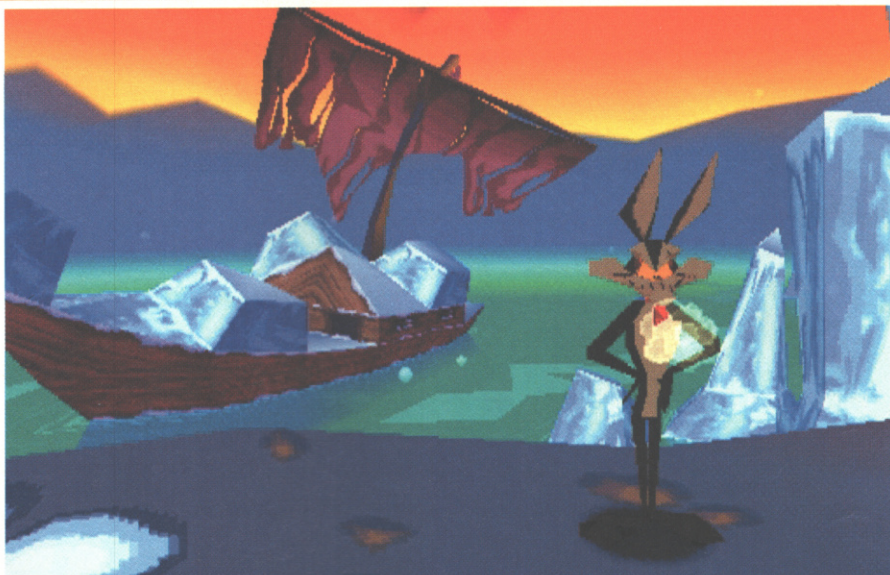
The game is based on a rare old Looney Tunes cartoon featuring a salivating Wolf named Ralph, a firm but fair sheepdog called Sam, and lots of hapless fluffy sheep. There were only ever eight episodes made, and Ralph was eventually replaced in the cartoon hall of fame by his more notorious cousin Wile E Coyote from *Road Runner*. Now Infogrames has used its Looney Tunes licence to resurrect Ralph and Sam and construct a fiendishly clever game around the basic premise of those eight cartoons.

LOCK UP YOUR SHEEP

Each of the eighteen levels starts with the same scenario. Playing as Ralph, you have to figure out how to sneak past the ever-vigilant Sam, steal one of his sheep and then carry it to the goal. Sounds easy? Pah!

The first level eases you in gently, with Daffy Duck acting as your tutor. Hardly the most helpful or patient of creatures, but somehow the splutteringly sarcastic one manages to convey the basics of how to sneak past Sam.

As the game progresses the levels get bigger and bigger, and more and more intricate. You have to use all sorts of weird

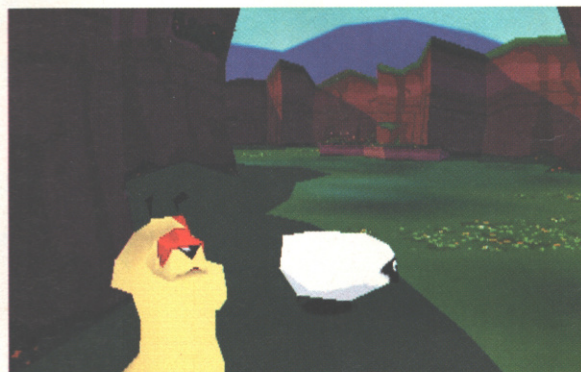


Here's Ralph. He's a wolf with an appetite for freshly slaughtered sheep. Trouble is, getting past that ever vigilant sheepdog Sam ain't easy

PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM

RALPH THE WOLF FIGHTS SAM THE SHEEPDOG IN A CARTOON CAPER THAT SURE AIN'T CHILD'S PLAY

WORDS MAURA SUTTON SCREENSHOTS INFOGRAMES



Sam scans the horizon for that pesky wolf Ralph. You want that sheep for dinner

ACME gadgets to get near to Sam and his flock, including a fake sheep costume, a hair dryer, and a metal detector. But thankfully not all at once.

LITTLE GREY CELLS

You can almost feel your brain expanding and contracting as you try to think your way around the obstacles between Ralph and



Porky Pig is just one of the many Looney Tunes faves who pop up

the sheep. Just like in *Metal Gear Solid*, you have to plan your route through the level and pit your wits against those of the enemy. One false move and Sam will be grabbing Ralph by the throat and pounding him into the ground like a furry tent peg. For a game that looks so cute, this is damn tough.

Despite plenty of furious bouts of cartoon style violence involving all manner of critters such as snorting bulls and snapping



The cartoony feel of the game is top class. Well done, Frenchies

crocodiles *SDnW* is not your average action-packed platformer, even though many of the levels feature distinctly platformy elements such as jumping and swimming.

C'EST BONNE

Made by a studio in France *SDnW* is one of those rare games that actually lives up to the clichés. Yes, it truly is an original game, and yes, it really does feel just like playing a cartoon. It's got Warner Bros authenticity stamped all over it.

Every aspect has been painstakingly recreated, from the way Ralph sneaks around on his tip-toes to the zany incidental music that chimes in at opportune moments. There are also plenty of cool cameos from all your Looney Tunes faves, including Bugs Bunny and Porky Pig, all of whom are brought to life by the official Looney Tunes voice actors.

BVG RECKONS

Surprisingly tough, fabulously funny and well challenging.

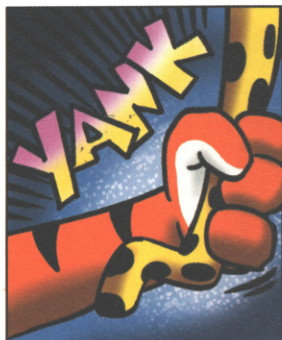
END

Kellogg's Tony the Tiger

in an
EPISODE OF GAS

In the last exciting episode of Gas, **Tony the Tiger** & his faithful manservant, **Diddit**, were engulfed by a cloud of sleeping gas whilst evil **Dr. Cheetah** made off with the **Secret Formula!**

NOT SO FAST
CHEERLESS CHEETAH



WHILE YOU
MAKE AN
EXIT!



WHY IS
THAT SIR?



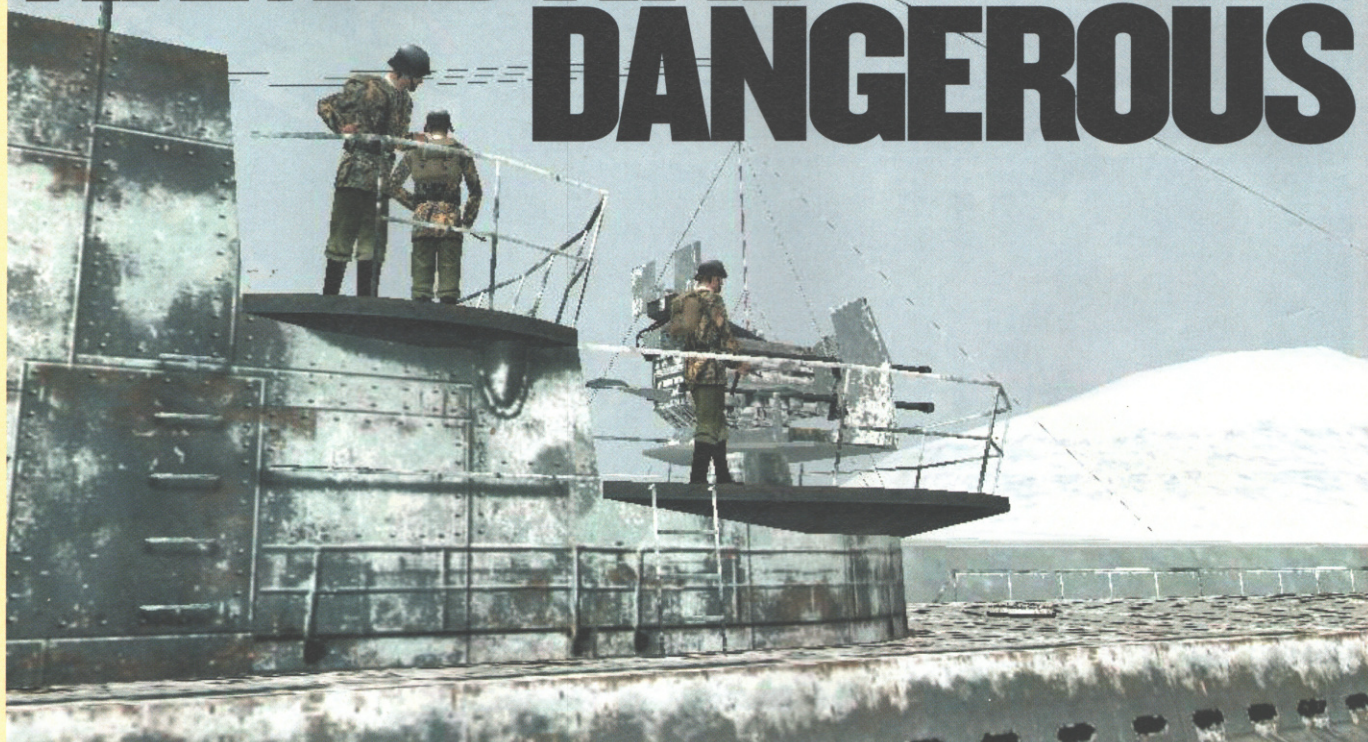
MOST
AMUSING
SIR



FOR YOU TOMMY, THE WAR HAS JUST BEGUN

ARMED AND DANGEROUS

WORDS PETER WALKER SCREENSHOT TAKE 2



HIDDEN & DANGEROUS 2

OUTAUTUMN 2001 FORMATPC

It's 1942. You're a British officer behind enemy lines in Africa. You've neatly blagged yourself one of the Luftwaffe's Me 323 transport planes to sneak into a Nazi base and kidnap an enemy colonel. You're feeling pretty smug. Bad move. A couple of British fighters reckon you'd look good notched up on their kill scoreboard.



You can view the action from first or third-person. Up to you Guv'

DIE, BRITISHER SCHWEIN! OOPS

You throw your plane around twisting, craggy canyons, taking dangerous shortcuts to try and shake 'em off. It's looking bad until a German fighter shows up to even up the odds. You're willing him to blow 'em out of the sky, when the truth of the twisted scenario dawns on you – you're a British soldier desperately hoping the enemy will take out your own side to save your butt. Seems like those creative Czechs at Illusion Softworks



Locations range from the Alps to the Arctic, Normandy and England

are trying all sorts of innovative tricks to make *H&D2* the perfect classic the original should've been.

NOT A FLIGHT SIM

H&D1 veterans will already have spotted piloting a plane arcade-style in a squad-based tactical shooter is a new element to the gameplay. But this is only one of many, including the ability to swim and an attributes enhancement system that relates to the



Around two dozen missions are spread across nine campaigns



Where you take a hit can affect your ability to perform some functions, with body part-specific damage...



...so a shot in the leg won't help you sprint. Attributes include strength, health, reactions, brains and stamina



You have to infiltrate this German pocket battleship parked up in a Norwegian fjord



Environments are more interactive, but just how much non-essential interactive detail there'll be is still undecided



Your character develops as you advance through the missions and the war

actions you perform in missions. But the friendly fire mission is also an attempt to make both the game environments and the consequences of your actions more believable.

So, assuming your plane actually makes it to that enemy base, going after the colonel guns blazing will attract continued reinforcements, meaning stealth weapons like a garrotte or a knife might be the sensible tactic.

WHAT'S THE STORY?

But one of the most obvious, far-reaching changes is that *HSD2* has a strong storyline tying the missions together, with a central character, Gary Bristol, who must survive to the final post-war showdown. Couple that with some truly atmospheric locations ranging from a battleship at night to a snow-clad, *Where Eagles Dare*-style hilltop fortress, and it should make for a more immersive playing experience than the slightly clinical original.

While more hardcore wargamers may have a bit of a bitch, we've seen the whole plot synopsis and how it's being implemented in the missions, and we reckon this new emphasis should add some soul to the proceedings. Not only will there be added pressure to protect your key character, but as the story unfolds you'll also have the added motivation of revenge.

DON'T BUG ME

Look up the word 'bug' in a dictionary, and in the definition, next to the words *Ultima Ascension*, you'll find *HSD1*. But while that

may have been the most obvious criticism, there were others, and Illusion is consulting closely with the original's dedicated fanbase on improvements.

So we can expect more intuitive controls, an Easy mode with a reasonable learning curve, improved enemy AI and pathfinding for your own squad members. Missions are also more 'objective based' (though not rigidly linear), and besides new vehicles to drive and weapons to fire, the overhead map can be easily accessed as an overlay while controlling your team.

RESERVOIR SQUADS

While you'll still get to review tactics and arm your squad appropriately before most missions, the squad reservoir will be far smaller and campaign specific. Fighting in Burma? Then gunkahs are available to you. You'll also be able to pick up extra squad members mid-mission too, and perform non-essential sub-missions. Don't panic about the ability enhancing element either – *HSD2* hasn't gone all RPG, but it will give you the chance to improve, say, your sniping skills as you progress through the game.

WORK (OF ART) IN PROGRESS?

Illusion still has plenty of work to do on *HSD2* and complex coding and motion capture software issues stemming from ambitious design goals haven't helped speed development along. The environments are already looking mint, stuffed full of

impressive detail – even cardboard box textures are based on photos of the real thing, and locations are littered with original WW2 posters.

Much of the finer detail is still being hammered out though, such as character facial expressions, states of alertness of enemies, the save feature, hiding in shadows and whether GameSpy is the way to go for online matching for deathmatch and co-op. A three-level multiplayer demo is due out in the next month or so, but don't be surprised if you're waiting longer than the official October release date to see the finished full version. Which means the next-gen versions in consideration will likely not be out until 2002 at the earliest – if it's as good as the DC take on the PC original, this should be worth the wait though.

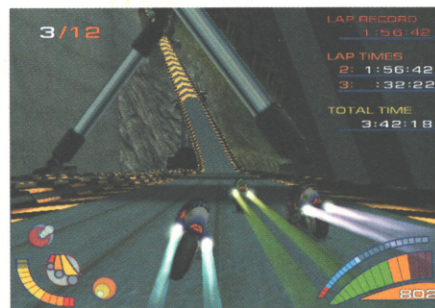
CVG RECKONS

We're itching to get hold of finished code, but we'll wait if it means it's bug-free and polished to perfection.

END



In our day these were called rollercoasters. Seems in the future they are racing tracks for supersonic motorbikes



Take a butcher's at that drop in the distance. Rather you than me



The only way a bike would stay on a track like that is pure speed

XXX-TREME RACING

ULTRA-FAST BIKER THAT LOOKS LIKE HITTING THE G-SPOT

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS LES ELLIS

EXTREME-G 3

OUT AUGUST FORMAT PS2

You may think Carl Fogarty and his mates are pretty nippy on their bikes, touching the floor with their knees at 140mph, but you ain't seen nothing yet. Try taking to the tarmac in *Extreme-G*. Oh, and listen for the moment you break the sound barrier when you do.

You can forget those wussy flat tracks and gentle corners of today's bike games – within seconds on this crazed biker you'll be hurtling down hills steeper than a lunch bill at the Ritz, looping loops and careering round the craziest tracks this side of Wacko Jacko's latest album. And if that doesn't sound dangerous enough, how about chucking in some vicious weapons for good measure?



The tracks are looking pretty tidy. The headlights are a nice touch



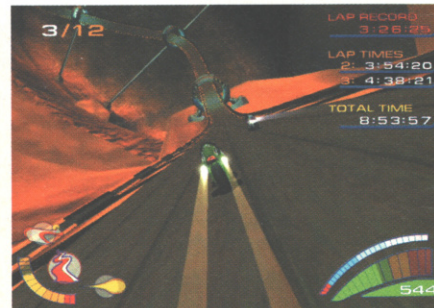
There is more than one route to take on this course

FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET

The N64 originally laid claim to the *Extreme-G* series, but for this kind of head-mashing speed the developers at Acclaim felt they needed a bit more oomph – and the PlayStation 2's Emotion Engine has supplied just that by the look of it. If they can keep the frame rate up to the standards set by these visuals, then we have the next PS2 blockbuster right here.

STICKS AND STONES...

... may break your bones but the weapons in this will vapourise them. Or melt them. Or smash them beyond recognition. You can imagine the mess if you get hit by a rocket when you're travelling at the speed of sound. Now imagine it if you happen to be upside



Play from the rider's view and it's damn hair-raising stuff

down or in the middle of a barrel roll or corkscrew – It's not going to be pretty. The two player split-screen means your racing can take on a deathmatch-like appearance as well. Take it from us, bike racing just doesn't come more extreme than this and with the right visual speed this could be an absolute winner.

EVG RECKONS

If the frame rate is right, this could be awesome.

END

DEADLY, ONCE THEY'RE IN THE BOX.



Trouble is, McVitie's Jaffa Cakes are so delicious you'll want to do all the finishing yourself. One taste of that great centre and you've just got to go for a double, or a treble. No wonder they're Man United's favourite half-time snack, especially as they're high in energy and low in fat. And here's your chance to join Man United on a special training day. For details visit www.manutd.com/jaffacakes.

MEVITIE'S
Jaffa Cakes
THE FAVOURITE HALF TIME SNACK
OF MANCHESTER UNITED



Check out this gnarly endo action. CVG has got some sick skillz

MATT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

OUTMAY FORMATPSONE

Hit the ramp at speed and go spinning into the air, holding onto the handlebars stretched out like Superman. Two and a half turns and you've crashed back to earth onto a thin rail which you slide backwards along, straddling the front wheel. Hop off the end and throw both your legs either side of the saddle before landing.

Welcome to the crazy reality of *Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX*. All the things you wished you could do on a real BMX are just a button press away, and you don't have to spend months in intensive care if you crack your face on the floor.

DIVE RIGHT IN

Of course you won't be showing skills like that straight away. If you've played a *Tony Hawk's* game, it could be literally minutes before you've got the score rattling up like a malfunctioning pinball machine. X jumps. Triangle grinds. Square and circle does tricks. Exactly the same controls as both *Pro Skater* games, and the trick timing's pretty similar too. If you were expecting an all-new extreme sports experience, you'll feel let down. But at least you know the gameplay is solid, and the objectives in the single player game are a blast to get through.

TONY WOZ 'ERE

It's said that you can't have too much of a good thing, so why should *Hoffman's* be the exception to the rule? Your dosh buys you 8 real-life BMXers, each performing their tricks slightly differently to the next. The indoor 'warehouse' levels look like they've been smuggled out of the Hawk's code wearing only a Groucho mask as a disguise, but the mud-chewing outdoor thrashes just couldn't be done on a deck. The level editor has been swiped from *Hawk's 2*, so if you're the patient type you need never run out of level to show your skills on.

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS DEAN SCOTT



Like *Tony Hawk's*, the wow factor is what really keeps you going. We're all for flair in videogames, especially in two-player match ups

SPEED OF SOUND

The Hawk's play mechanics still make for a fearsomely exhilarating extreme sports experience, and it's going to be fun to have a whole load of new objectives to attack on brand new levels. Looks-wise it's more Goldie Hawn than Kate Hudson, borrowing it's poly-producing guts from the first Hawk's game. It still rattles along at a fearsome pace, burying the geriatric chug of *Dave Mirra BMX* under a hail of quickfire rocket airs.

OUT IN MAY? HUH?

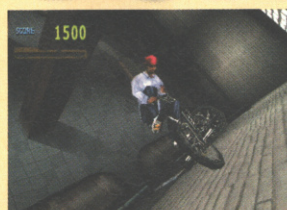
It's out in May, about a year after it was first announced. *Hoffman* has slipped more than a blind man trying to breakdance in a banana skin warehouse. Evidently it takes a lot longer than we'd have thought it would to build a new game out of the same bricks as an old one. The PSone release is the first of a trilogy of Hoffman games, with Dreamcast and Game Boy Advance versions also in the pipeline, probably out later this year.



If that was a skater there instead of a BMXer, you'd think this was a screen from *Tony Hawk's*, wouldn't you? Go on, admit it

IT'S CERTAINLY GNARLY, BUT CAN HOFFMAN OUTJUMP HAWK?

TONY HAWK'S TOO



Tricks look even sweeter in replay mode



The 'triangle' grind - Matt Hoffman style



At least Tony hasn't got a stupid beard

CVG RECKONS

It's *Tony Hawk's* on a bike. Sorry, but it is. Whether or not you think that's a problem is down to you.

END

SHAKE YOUR JUNGLE ASS!

MARCH IN TIME TO
PS2'S FIRST
RHYTHM-ACTION
GAME

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS LEE SKITTELL

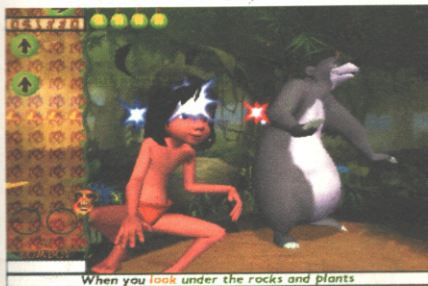
JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY

OUTLATE APRIL FORMATPS2

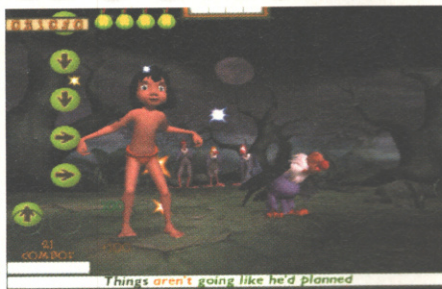
Get your leg warmers at the ready for a full-on Disney work-out, courtesy of Mowgli, Baloo and all your favourite Jungle Book friends. *Groove Party* tells the story of the young man-cub and his journey through the jungle using excellent songs and stunning cutscenes. Dance in time with the arrows on screen to bust a groove and finish the story.

SIMPLE PLEASURES

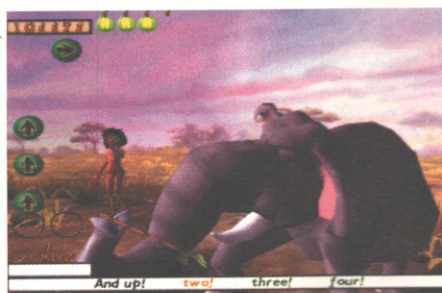
The single player game is fairly simple, but it's the two-player games that'll cause the biggest smiles. Two of you can hit the mats in dance-offs, game challenges and even a full-on dance marathon to test your stamina. Arrow balloons float down the screen and you have to stomp on the corresponding direction.



Re-enact the classic Bear Necessities track from the movie



We Are The Vultures is not our favourite song of the lot but the birds' Beatles-like voices are a hoot



The controls are dead simple and even your mum will join in



Everything looks nice though it won't make your Gran drop dead of a heart attack thinking it's a real orang-utang in the room

MAMBO NO 5

There are some cool new additions to *Groove Party* for the PS2 version, including an appearance from one-hit wonder Lou Bega. He pops up in an unlockable mode along with new characters to play with, dance theatres where you can check out everyone's moves, and even a dead swish karaoke mode where you sing along to the backing track.

GVG RECKONS

It's pretty easy but younger players will love it.

END

DARK KNIGHT FRIGHT?

HOLY MACKEREL BATMAN! YOUR GAME SUCKS ASS!

BATMAN GOTHAM CITY RACER

OUTLATE APRIL FORMATPSONE

This is a title that has everything going for it. Batman is an excellent licence, the concept for the game – a mission-based action racer – is brilliant and the potential for two-player cops 'n' robbers style thrills makes us want to ping our utility belts with anticipation. So it's a mystery to us why the designers are trying to squeeze all of this awesome gaming potential onto PSone now the technology is pretty much past it.

IT'S ALL WRONG

There is an awful lot wrong in our early version of *Gotham City Racer*, and the development team are really going to have to pull their fingers out to avoid a universal panning when the game hits the stores.

The graphics are currently painfully inadequate, with plain polygons and nasty jagged edges spoiling the potentially ace atmosphere. There are loads of vehicles to drive but in our version the handling was seriously askew. The level layout and the distressing pop-up also make navigating through the streets of Gotham something akin to torture and certain missions with certain cars were as good as unplayable.



Pray to God they do something about these visuals. They suck

RACER OF SHAME

The biggest shame is that there are the seeds of something very good indeed hidden away here. The Adventure mode tries to offer Batman-tinged *Driver*-style action. Patrol mode lets you cruise the city streets helping to thwart the evil doings of Batman's enemies and the two player cops 'n' robbers style chase could be sweet too. Serious improvements are needed.



Two player promises so much yet looks like delivering so little

GVG RECKONS

There's still lots to be done.
Wait for our review.

END

OPERATION FLASHPOINT

OUT MAY/FOR MAY PC

Heartlessly slaying as many dumb-ass computer-controlled opponents as possible in the most gut-wrenching manner conceivable has been a pleasure enjoyed by psycho gamers everywhere ever since the flamethrowing postals of *Syndicate*.

But in these times of improving computer AI, you have to watch who you're up against. Being flattened under the tracks of the tank a computer controlled soldier has been chasing you with is maybe not everyone's idea of fun. In *Operation Flashpoint* this could be the situation you find yourself in, as the AI in here would give chess supercomputer Big Blue a run for its money.

I THINK THEREFORE YOU DIE

Apart from some promising AI routines, from a glance at the screenshots you'll also notice that this is more than just a squad-based tactical shooter – cars, tanks, boats, planes choppers, even tractors get put at your disposal at various points in the game.

But thankfully for the majority of players the vehicle controls stop short of anything sim-like. What's more, from the nine level demo that's already kept us up to greet the milkie a few times, you'll even be gently eased into the different gameplay elements through a series of clever and engaging training missions.

LESSONS IN HATE

Need to learn how to run and handle weapons? Then start out trying to escape alone and unarmed from an occupied village.



BACK IN THE USSR

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS PETER WALKER

THE COLD WAR JUST GOT HOT AGAIN



Check out the lens flare on that, missus. That's detail for you



Some intuitive shortcuts make moving squads around fairly easy



It may not be a main battle tank but it's better than nothing



Even up close the character models are looking pretty sweet

Need to learn how the squad system works? Then begin another mission as one of the squad, with an icon prompting you where you're supposed to be in the squad formation. Just as you reckon you've come to terms with the vast number of orders barked by the squad leader, it's your turn.

In fact it's several missions in before to real scale of the game dawns on you. Not just the massive maps, 30 missions, 30 vehicles, multiplay, level editor and weapons for all types of missions, but the real potential for replayability.

GOTTA SEE IT ALL

What could be really special though, is the fiendish attention to detail. Enemy units appearing in different spots from the last time you played the mission, brush and undergrowth that you can climb through and snipe from, stars you can navigate by, promotion for success, long sprints causing you to noisily gasp for breath and alert guards, vehicles' headlamps lighting up the countryside at night, leg shots forcing you to crawl – this sort of detail and realism really makes you want to go back and explore using different tactics just to see how it all works.

FLASH HARRY

Operation Flashpoint seems to have enough of a Cold War plot to make the missions believable and build some atmosphere, and with a few cosmetic alterations, the environments should be more than immersive too. With this and *Hidden and Dangerous 2* out in the same year, we can smell blood in the air.

EVG RECKONS

Should please commie bashers everywhere.

END

THIS IS THE JOURNAL OF KIT SCOTT ESQ, ADVENTURER AND SOON TO BE PILOT, AGED 10 $\frac{2}{3}$

DAY 17 MOUNT DRAMIR

JUICECHOPPER © PROF JAMES REEF

TOP SPEED: 170 mph.

MAX. LOAD:
100 Kgs.

UNIQUE CITRUS

JUICE ENGINE, SIMPLY ADD
FRUIT JUICE HERE.

RANGE: 200 MILES (WHEN
POWERED BY THE FINEST FRUIT JUICES
FROM THE ROWNTREE. LESSER JUICES
MAY RESULT IN LOSS OF POWER WHEN
AIR BORN).

Taking refuge from the blizzard which hit us on the third day, Loreth and I stumbled into the first cave we found and fell asleep immediately. I was woken by blinding sunlight glaring off the snow outside, and stretched to get the stiffness out of my bruised bones (from having rocks for a mattress).

To my surprise the daylight revealed that the cave was a hangar for a funny looking helicopter. There was a key in the ignition and I gave it a turn.

The chopper wheezed into life, like an old, tired donkey. But hopefully better at flying.

Brilliant, I thought. According to Loreth's maps, the Rowntree was in front of us, and this grew beyond the Canyon of Needles. Then, just as I was congratulating myself on my luck, the engine spluttered and died. I could not read the gauges on the dashboard, but the arrows pointed at zero. It had run out of fuel. I desperately hunted around for some sort of manual, and found a hand-written note slipped under the seat: "She flies like a parrot and eats like one too." I knew that parrots ate fruit, so perhaps

the chopper ran on fruit juice, but that wasn't much good in this snowy wilderness. Was it?

Visit www.helpkit.co.uk, leave your help and advice there and I'll contact you.

THE VIEW FROM HERE TO NEEDLE CANYON.
INTERESTING TREES, BUT NO ROWNTREE.

SEARCH FOR
THE ROWNTREE

CREATE YOUR OWN SEARCH @
WWW.ROWNTREES.CO.UK

FRUIT
ROWNTREE'S
GUMS

MAP XXVIII

MACHIA



Greatest hits compilations. We've all got one nestling somewhere in our CD collections. But the gaming equivalent are rarer than an original concept in a PS2 game. Capcom, Konami and Sega have all tried it, but currently you can't stroll into your local games shop and pick up a single disc or cartridge with the absolute best collection of games for any one format. Well, this side of Emulatorville, anyways. So it's down to wily players to ferret out for themselves those all-time classics that make up gaming's Hall of Fame.

But just how tricky is it to bag the greatest games collection ever at bargain basement prices? The CVG team took the £100 challenge, rifling the Net, second-hand haunts and market stalls to get the Best Ever collections for the cream of current consoles, plus the finest systems from a few years back. We only chose machines that have an established collection of stunning titles, hence no PlayStation 2 at the moment. Who got the best deal for their money? Let's take a look...

Get the world's best games collection, all for £100

THE GREATEST GAMES IN THE WORLD... EVER!



FEATURING

• Super Mario World • Devil Crash • Zelda: Ocarina of Time • Street Fighter 3
• GoldenEye • Metal Gear Solid • ISS Pro Evolution • Mickey Mouse: Castle of Illusion
• Tekken 3 • Crazy Taxi • Super Mario 64 • Gran Turismo 2 • Warioland



Name: Pete Walker

Format of choice: DC

Reason for choice: "Though production is winding down and it's prematurely heading towards the end of its lifespan, the Dreamcast still rocks. In my opinion, (and many others') it has the finest selection of software of any current console, and Sega's first-party titles have consistently staggered me with their quality and originality. You'd be amazed at how cheaply you can pick some of these titles up second-hand."

THE GAMES

1 VIRTUA TENNIS £18

The finest tennis game ever created, bar none.

2 SONIC ADVENTURE £10

As a launch title this was a stunner, and it still plays like a dream.



Virtua Tennis: accurate, if a tad zombified, faces



Sonic Adventure: looks sweet and plays mint



Soul Calibur: redefined the beat 'em up genre



Power Stone: intense multiplayer magic



Crazy Taxi: be the king of the cabbies

3 SOUL CALIBUR £15

For some, this is still the greatest beat 'em up on any machine.

4 POWER STONE £12

Another launch title that is still brilliant, especially in multiplayer.

5 CRAZY TAXI £15

Completely cool, completely mad, and completely awesome.

6 SPACE CHANNEL 5 £15

Coollest game ever? Could be. Rhythm-action at its finest.

"Up, chu, chu, chu."

7 VIRTUA FIGHTER 3 £10

Despite the disappointing PAL conversion, this is still a great fighter. Roll on VF4.

Method of purchase: Specialist games store

Total cost: £95



Name: Alex Simmons

Format of choice: N64

Reason for choice: "Nintendo makes the best games in the world, period. Whilst the N64 hasn't exactly been flooded with software of late, it has played host to a handful of the greatest titles in history. *Mario 64* completely rewrote the rule book and hey, it was you guys that voted *GoldenEye* as your favourite game of all time. Given the opportunity to purchase a load of cut-price, second-hand software, the N64 was simply irresistible."

THE GAMES

1 SUPER MARIO 64 £12

The best game ever? Could be, but either way, this revolutionised gaming forever.

2 ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME £20

Oh, this game is sooo good. Another candidate for the best game ever: 3D adventuring at its finest.



Super Mario 64: badass Bowser in beautiful 3D



Zelda: Ocarina of Time: time travelling Link



GoldenEye: snipe your way to victory



Mystical Ninja: this gem could only be Jap-made



Rogue Squadron: "Oh my god, it's Star Wars!"

3 GOLDENEYE £15

Readers voted this the best game ever. A timeless classic.

4 MYSTICAL NINJA STARRING GEOMON £8

Crazy, quirky Japanese RPG action that's still cool.

5 ROGUE SQUADRON £10

The first Expansion Pak-compatible title, and a brilliant use of the Star Wars licence.

6 YOSHI'S STORY £10

Classic platform action. Full of charm, but a little easy. Worth getting hold of cheaply, though.

7 BANJO-KAZOOIE £15

Rare's massive, sprawling platform monster that went straight for *Mario 64*'s jugular. One of the few games that actually succeeded in making the plumber bake a brownie in his dungeons.

Method of purchase: Market stall

Total Cost: £90



Name: Lee Skittrell

Format of choice: Game Boy/Color

Reason for choice: "There's a vast amount of awesome first-party Nintendo titles available, and swathes of other quality titles that you can pick up pretty cheaply. The Game Boy is the biggest selling console ever, and there's a good reason for that. It's one of videogames' great success stories, and buying second-hand games is the ideal way to make the most of this iconic classic."

THE GAMES

1 POKEMON RED £9.45 AVERAGE

It's the original, seminal *Pokémon* game that started the craze.

2 ZELDA: LINK'S AWAKENING £9.45 AVERAGE

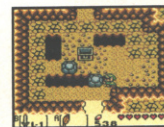
Astonishing RPG. Amazing what they've squeezed onto the cart.

3 LOONEY TOONS: MARTIAN ALERT! £9.45 AVERAGE

Pokémon-style collect 'em up with more action emphasis. Top stuff.



Pokémon Red: Pocket-sized world domination



Zelda: Link's Awakening: best GB game ever?



Martian Alert! catch 'em all, Toons-style



Warioland 2: Mario's nemesis holds his own



Super Mario Land: stunning GB launch title

4 WARIOLAND 2 £9.45 AVERAGE

Fantastic platformer involving Nintendo's mustachioed anti-hero.

5 SUPER MARIO LAND £9.45 AVERAGE

The original GB platformer and a pint-size masterpiece.

6 RAYMAN £9.45 AVERAGE

Gorgeous-looking and classic-playing platform action.

7 DRAGON WARRIOR MONSTERS £9.45 AVERAGE

Pokémon-style collect 'em up, with more emphasis on breeding.

8 DOUBLE DRAGON £9.45 AVERAGE

Old but competent conversion of the classic 2D beat 'em up

9 TETRIS DX £9.45 AVERAGE

The finest, most addictive puzzle game ever made.

Method of purchase: Newspaper ad – all nine titles sold in bundle

Total cost of bundle: £85



Les Ellis

PlayStation

"When the PlayStation launched in 1995, no-one could have predicted the astonishing success it has subsequently enjoyed. It's no fluke that it has become the most successful home console in history. With franchises such as *Final Fantasy*, *Tekken*, *Gran Turismo*, *Resident Evil*, and *ISS*, it's become the first choice for many hardcore gamers."

METAL GEAR SOLID £10

A genuine, if short-lived, work of genius. Put the fun into stealth.

ISS PRO EVOLUTION £12

Forget FIFA, this is football, plain and simple. A masterpiece.

GRAN TURISMO 2 £12

The most detailed, accurate driving sim seen so far.



Metal Gear Solid: solid by name and by nature



ISS Pro Evolution: it's the beautiful game



Gran Turismo 2: like driving the real thing



Tekken 3: PSone's finest beat 'em up hour



Final Fantasy VIII: more complex than VII

TEKKEN 3 £10

Legions of devotees worldwide worship at the shrine of *Tekken*.

FINAL FANTASY VIII (LIMITED ED. BOX SET) £20

Awesome, epic marred by a confusing way of equipping attacks.

TOMB RAIDER £7

The game that started the craze and arguably the series' best.

CRASH BANDICOOT £8

Cracking 3D platformer that's a top laugh despite its linear nature.

COOL BOARDERS 2 £8

Not a patch on N64 *1080°* but still a pretty cool snowboarder.

RESIDENT EVIL £10

The first in Capcom's classic survival-horror series. Scared us witless at the time.

Specialist computer shop and market

£97

RETRO

Two of our illustrious team, Johnny and Dan, maintain that they don't make 'em like they used to, so they decided to reignite that great battle of yore – SNES vs. MegaDrive. As the price of software and hardware for these machines is now so cheap, both writers included purchase of the console in their total. Aaaand, fight!



Name: Johnny 'Stinky' Minkley

Format of choice: SNES

Reason for choice: "Hello!? *Super Mario World*....What? You want more? OK. Quite simply, the SNES is the finest console ever released, with games that are still as awesome and as fresh as they were ten years ago. When we got *Mario Kart* and *Mario World* in, the office ground to a complete halt – 'nuff said."

THE GAMES

1 SUPER MARIO WORLD

Widely regarded among members of this office as the finest game in the history of the world. Ever. A stonking 96 levels of pure joy.



Super Mario Kart: We're still playing it today

2 SUPER MARIO KART

Arguably better than on N64.

3 STREET FIGHTER 2 TURBO

Forget 3D fighters - this is the don.

4 MARIO ALL-STARS

Worth it for *Mario 3* alone.

5 STAR WING

Revolutionary 3D experience then.

6 SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Enhanced version of arcade classic.

7 SUPER BOMBERMAN

Rarely-bettered multiplayer madness.

8 DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

Nearly a *Mario*-beater, this platformer caused a stir.

9 SUPER STAR WARS

One of the finest movie tie-ins of all time. Wees all over Phantom Menace on PSone.

10 ACTRAISER

Strange slash 'em up/RPG hybrid that worked surprisingly well. Awesome choons, too.

11 PILOT WINGS

As a lunch title, this really showed what Mode 7 graphics were capable of.

12 SUPER TENNIS

One of the greatest sports games ever, and for many, only superseded by *Virtua Tennis*.

13 CONVERTER TO PLAY IMPORT GAMES

Method of purchase: Car boot sale

Total Cost of bundle: £100 all in



Actraiser: One of the finest orchestral scores ever

Dan 'Bossy' Payne

Sega MegaDrive

"Sega may have had the odd hardware slip-up since the MegaDrive, but as a games company they've always been one of the best.

Though DC has a heap of killer apps, the MegaDrive was the don in my opinion. A masterpiece of design from the golden age of gaming."

SONIC 2

Improves on the original in every way – faster, sleeker, and cooler.

GAIRIES

Only ever released in Japan but a truly fine side-scrolling shooter.



Gairies: obscure but stunning old skool shooter

WARDNER SPECIAL

Awesome coin-op conversion.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

The first outing for the blue hog.

DEVIL CRASH

A stunning, macabre, gothic pinball.

GOLDEN AXE

Side-scrolling fantasy beat 'em up.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Original swim 'em up.

MOONWALKER

Hilarious Wacko Jacko antics where he prances around to renditions of his own tracks, dancing zombies to death.

HARD DRIVIN'

Fun, if a little rosey, version of the arcade classic.

WONDERBOY 3

Straight conversion of the side-scrolling arcade platformer.

CASTLE OF ILLUSION STARRING MICKEY MOUSE

Stunning graphics for its time.

STRIDER

Graphically stupendous slasher.

GHOLDS 'N' GHOSTS

One of the most hardcore platformers ever.

THUNDERFORCE 3

Scrolling shooter many considered the don of that era.

CONVERTER TO PLAY IMPORT GAMES

Method of purchase: Net auction

£92 all in



Castle of Illusion: Disney sometimes gets it bang on

LOOK WHAT YOU COULD HAVE BROUGHT

As you can see, when spent wisely 100 smackers can go a long way, especially when you compare it to the cost of certain brand new items that cost and promise the earth but deliver a lot less value for

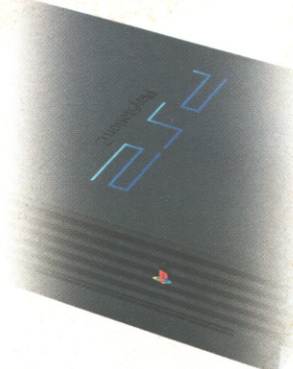
money. As our feature shows, if you go retro, you can even get a console as well as a stack of games for a fraction of the price of a next-gen console. With the depressing lack of originality in many recent releases, who's to say goings backwards isn't the way forwards? Now, where's our games tardis...?



PSOne - It looks like the business and has the potential for portable play (to a degree) via the attachable screen. However, the PS one alone will set you back around 80 quid and then it's an additional expense of £100 for the privilege of playing it on the small screen.



Samba Di Amigo - awesome maraca-shaking action. The ultimate party game for sure, but it'll set you back a cool £100. Look at all the DC games Pete managed to get, then compare it with buying one game and a couple of peripherals. Do you see?



PS2 - Instead of all those lurvely games, you could buy yourself a third of a PS2. We'd go for the middle third with the cool PS2 logo on 'cos, if people are soft enough to pay £5 for an empty PS2 box, a bit of the real thing should fetch £15 in a Net auction.

HANDS OFF! THEY'RE MINE

As you can see from the pride written on each persons face as they clutch some of their wares, everyone thinks they've done pretty well. Despite this however, there were more than a few envious glances when everyone revealed their wares - the very presence of *Super Mario Kart* caused Johnny and Pete to come to blows. Here's what the team had to say:

LEE: "What videogamer in their right mind can say their life is complete without a copy of *Pokémon*? I mean, honestly."

"Check my MegaDrive out! I'm made up with having the original *Sonic* and you can all keep your thieving hands off of it. 'Ave summa that, Check me out. Skill. Pukkah. Blah, blah..."

JOHNNY: "Tell you what Pete, I'll give you my *Mario Kart* for all your DC games, your car, your house and a million pounds..."

PETE: "Come on Johnny, I just got to borrow it for the weekend. (Flying into a rage) GIVE IT TO ME NOW!"

JOHNNY: "Nope."

PETE: "GAAAAH!"

"I blatantly beat you all with my limited edition *Final Fantasy VIII* box set. If only the box was black..."

ALEX: "You all suck. I've got *Ocarina of Time*, which is sweet as. And *Mario 64*. And *GoldenEye*!"

(Begins cackling manically!)

CVG RECKONS

There's nothing quite like owning the latest games, and the rush you experience from buying an awesome game on the day it comes out will never be replaced. There are some truly staggering games (and machines) out there that you might have missed, however, and they're

all available for surprisingly cheap prices. Our advice is to shop around: poke about in your local market; check out the local papers; surf the Net - it takes a bit of time, but it's well worth it if you want to make the most of your hard-earned cash. Try hard enough and you might just walk away with the bargain of the century.

WIN THIS LOT NOW!

THE BEST COMPETITIONS ARE ALWAYS IN CVG



**1
TO WIN**

VELOCIRAPTOR INSTRUMENTS DIRECT

£24.99

One of the stars of the UK's top Toy Fair in London earlier this year was the B.C. Bones range of prehistoric beasts. Rebuild prehistory piece by piece with this menacing 3D wooden jigsaw, which stands 21 inches tall. You won't find this in many shops so check it out online at letoy.co.uk if you just *have* to buy one.



**9
TO WIN**

WWF FIGURES STORM

£8.99

We've teamed up with Storm once again to bring you even more wrestling action, this time in the shape of these Real Sounds Arena-compatible figures, complete with cool 3D wrestling pics. We've got one finishing move pack featuring The Rock and Chris Jericho, Jeff and Matt Hardy, Big Show, Tazz, Steve Austin and two Road Dog figures.

**15
TO WIN**

DIGIMON - SERIES 2 FIGURES BANDAI

£8.99

Are Digimon the champions? If you reckon so, you're gonna love our range of Digimon Series 2 figures boasting moveable arms and speech. These bang up-to-date models feature the latest critters in the world of Digimon, and we have five Hawkmon, five Gatamon and five Veemon up for grabs. It's your call!

**3
TO WIN**

TEKSTA KITTY VIVID IMAGINATIONS

£39.99

Cyber canine Teksta was toy of the year in 2000, and also grabbed the Christmas Number One spot. This feline version is also an impressive piece, packed with cool features, the ability to learn and interacts with the dog. And this pet won't poop on the carpet or lick its own bottom.



**2
TO WIN**

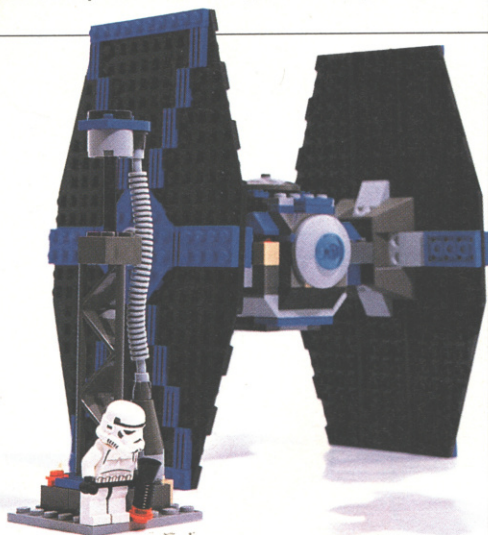
HYPER PEPPY II INSTRUMENTS DIRECT

£19.99

Fancy building your own intelligent robot? Time to put your best engineering pants on and dig out your dad's tool box. This baby has a sound sensor that reacts when you clap, causing it to retreat and change direction. Cool.



This could be the only compo you ever need to enter. Every month we give you the chance to win the coolest, funkiest, most splendid products you'd otherwise have to fork out for. It's dead easy to enter – just fill out the coupon with your name and address and we'll make a different draw for each prize. What could be simpler? Get entering, now!



**3
TO WIN**

LEGO AT-ST AND TIE FIGHTER

LEGO £8.99/£16.99

Oh my god! We at CVG love, honour and adore everything to do with Star Wars (except bad Wars games), so when these amazing kits arrived from Lego the team turned puce in the face with over-excitement. As painful as it is to part with them, we've got two eight-inch tall AT-ST's and one TIE Fighter the size of a small football to give away. Yes!



**2
TO WIN**

BIONICLE

LEGO £36 for each set

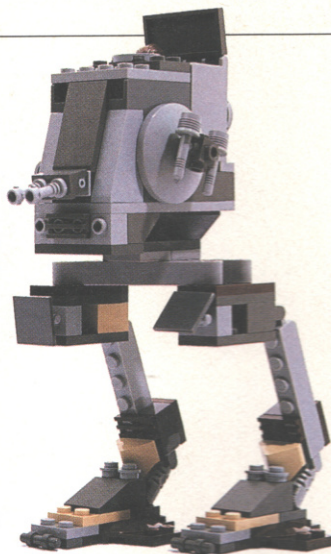
Check out Gali, from Lego's awesome new range of creatures set in the strange world of Mata Nui. Here's your chance to own the complete set of six legendary Toa including Gali, building them from scratch into six-inch tall mighty robotic figures from a distant galaxy. Sweet.

**5
TO WIN**

TALKING RAINBOW SOFT TOYS GOLDEN BEAR

£9.99

Just a quick glance at Saturday night TV is enough to realise Eighties nostalgia is back with a vengeance. Rainbow is one of the most memorable shows from this golden age of kids' TV. Now you can relive all those magic moments with your own talking Zippy, Bungle or George, each replete with their own classic phrases. Five toys in total to be won. Paint the whole world with a Rainbow!



**15
TO WIN**

BOGLINS – TECHNO GHOULS VIVID IMAGINATIONS

£14.99

The ugly muthas return and they're more vile than ever. Each Techno Ghoul features its own sickening selection of sounds effects, and hideous glowing eyes. Your Gran'll love it.



WINNERS UPDATE – ISSUE 232

LOONEY TUNES RACING

Simon Thyne, Shropshire; Matthew Richards, Notts; Steve Collins, Bristol; Jay Metcalfe, London; Dean Wellam, Edinburgh; Allen Scott, Herts; S Rao, Northants; Jake Wilkinson, Surrey; Faye Greene, Dorset; Mark Bestwick, Hartlepool

MEGA MICROSOFT BUNDLE



Paul Brock, Cambridge; Steve Billingsley, Brighton; Dan Pickles, Stevenage; I Ray, London; Ben Enright, Liverpool; Harry Barnes, Bucks

GAME BOY BATTERY PUCK



Rory Cooper, Bolton; Francis Mulenga, Staffs; Allan Lawry, London; Martin Evans, Cheshire; Vivien Lee, London

TAZ 4X4 CAR



J Duberry, Newcastle; Allen Ryan, Dublin; Maria Paddon, Bristol

PSONE + ACTION MAN GAME

Daniel Knight, London

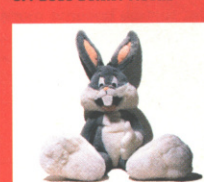
ACTION MAN GAME

Steve Forester, Bristol; Brian Fletcher, London; Benjamin Woodhouse, London; Barry Ruff, Ipswich

GAME BOY TRAVEL PACK



3FT BUGS BUNNY FIGURE



Amy Harrison, Tunbridge Wells

SYLVESTER AND TWEETIE FIGURINE

M.Cooper, Manchester; Rob Flanagan, Birmingham

Ijadola Joseph, Hackney; Janet Divine, Cardiff; Daniel Edwardson, Cheshire; Luke Bailey, Durham; Jesse Mullins, Bucks

GO ON – WIN IT!

It couldn't be easier to enter. Fill in this coupon and send to: Win This Lot Now! 234, Computer and Video Games, 30 Cleveland St, London, W1P 5FF. First correct answers out of the hat for each prize win. Entries close May 17th.

NAME: AGE:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Dennis Publishing Ltd may contact you about other offers, or pass your name address or email to other reputable companies whose products and services may be of interest to you. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive such offers ☐

WORDS: LES ELLIS PICS: KENNY P LEE'S TATTOO: DIAMOND JACKS

This *Final Fantasy 9* tattoo belongs to CVG's very own Lee Skittrell. He's games mad. But it's nothing next to the guy who changed his name to PlayStation 2. Here's our look at what people do

FOR THE LOVE OF

You guys know your videogames. That's why you buy CVG. You know which games are hot before your mates have even heard of them. But there's a limit to your devotion. You wouldn't lock yourself away for months on end, playing *Phantasy Star Online*, right? And changing your name to PlayStation 2 is plain ridiculous, isn't it? Well, some people don't think so. They love games so much they're prepared to permanently tattoo their favourite game hero on their bodies, and that includes CVG's resident *Final Fantasy* freak Lee. For others, games become more important than life itself. Be afraid. Be VERY afraid.



GAMES



Lee's tattoo is of the crystal in the *FF9* logo. Check out Canadian gamer NoClan/Sniper's hardcore *Unreal* tattoo below right



TATTOOED GAME GODS

We're not talking those temporary stickers you put on your arms for a weekend and wash off again before you go back to school. Oh no. We're talking proper tattoos. There are people out there who are prepared to scar themselves for life to prove their love of games.

Lara Croft is the leading lady of the tattoo parlour it seems, with men quite happy to make their wives or girlfriends jealous by spending more cash on scratching her on their arms than they do on them. And according to the tattoo artists we spoke to, Sega's spiky Sonic is another firm favourite.

For other examples of videogame-inspired self-mutilation, check out our Lee here with his tattoo based on the *Final Fantasy 9* logo. Painful though it looks, he swears it was worth every tear! But it doesn't stop there. We've heard a tale about Microsoft in America where one of their female staff has had the Xbox logo tattooed on her butt. Believe us, we tried *hard* to get a picture of that for you. Others we have heard of include a hardcore *Unreal Tournament* player known only as NoClan/Sniper from Canada having the *UT* logo tattooed on his arm, people with *Tekken* characters plastered all over them, plus a retro fan who is getting a *Space Invader* tattooed on his back.

PARTY POOPER

One guy we spoke to told us this little story: "I once missed a friend's birthday party because of *Resident Evil 2*. The day of the party I was playing a bit of the game, finding myself more and more helplessly engrossed. "I ended up excusing myself from the party claiming I was ill and raced back to the game. I finished it exhausted at 6am Sunday morning, pausing only for coffee and chocolate. The only game that has made me jump out of my seat. That day and night sums up PlayStation for me, plus the fact I'll never trust a girl called Ada Wong again..."

FOR GOD'S SAKE MAN!

We could excuse a girl for changing her name to Lara Croft, especially if it was done to keep a boyfriend happy. We could maybe even understand if a guy decided he wanted to be known as Duke Nukem or maybe even Ryuken. But when a geezer takes it upon himself to change his name by deed poll to the Reverend PlayStation 2 — we'd have to say that's going too far.

And that's exactly what Carl Lindley is doing, even at the expense of his relationship with his girlfriend. She doesn't seem to like the idea of shouting "PS2" at him and has already dumped him because of his obsession.

Carl says his friends can call him Play — yeah, well we wouldn't worry too much about your friends Carl, we don't think you'll have many left soon. Especially when they see the temple to the PlayStation 2 that you are building in your back garden. Why can't you just have a garden shed like everyone else. Mentalist.



THE DARK SIDE OF HARDCORE

Only in America. Tony Bragg of Tampa, Florida, was jailed for 15 years for neglecting his child to the extent that he died. Part of the reason, it seems, was Bragg's addiction to online RPG *Everquest*. His son received injuries, but it took Bragg 24 hours to get off the damn game long enough to call an ambulance. He had also lost a job through bunking off to play *Everquest*.

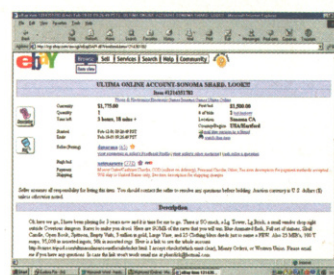
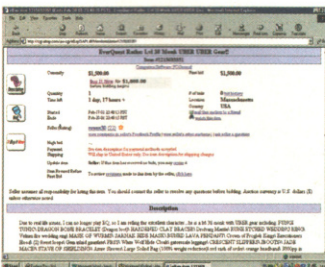
Though the game was not directly blamed by the courts, the newspapers jumped on the chance to have another pop at the games industry. Sad, sad, sad git. But remember this is the country that has high school shootings once a month — why they can't just play football instead is beyond us.



UNDER THE HAMMER

You'd think that online gaming and auctions have nothing in common with true hardcore gaming. But a quick breeze through E-Bay, the online auction site (www.ebay.com), and you uncover some seriously hardcore games-related antics.

Take the guy who is selling a weapon for *Diablo 2* for a mere \$200. You send him the money and he promises to meet you in the game and give it to you — would you trust him? Or even more extreme, how about someone willing to sell you their character for online RPG *Everquest* at a mere \$1,800? Sounds a bargain to us.



Ultima Online has also seen its fair share of auctions, with in-game houses and accounts all up for sale. A tester at Origin lost his job for making cash on the side by selling items he created by cheating. Some people have way too much free cash, and there are plenty of people willing to help them get rid of it, it seems.

And it's not just PC games that experience this — newly released *Phantasy Star Online* for the DC is already attracting attention in the auctions, with rare items up for sale if you can't be arsed to play it properly. With PS2 and X-Box going online, you can expect a lot more of this, who needs a proper job when you can cash in like this.

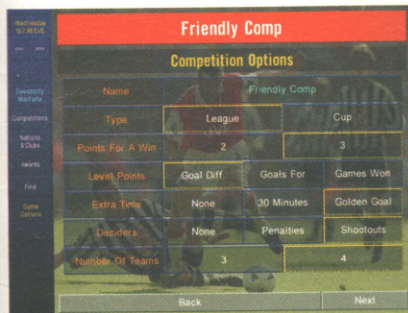


THE HARDEST OF THE HARDCORE

And if you think you can go hardcore, this is what you have to compete with. Nick Wisewell doesn't just develop videogames, he lives and breathes them as well.

He and his wife Dee have got Sonic and Nights tattoos – but that's just the start. After their wedding they went on Honeymoon to the E3 show in the States – and at the wedding they even had the music from *Final Fantasy 7* playing during the ceremony.

As if that wasn't hardcore enough they live in a house crammed with gaming related ornaments, characters and merchandise. Not to mention the small matter of over 2,000 games, just about every console released over the last 20 years and even three arcade machines. Beat that.



FOOTBALL CRAZY

Having enough time to play games is pretty important for some of us – but when you ditch your partner because you love games more it could be going a little too far.

We've heard stories of a guy who has actually got *Championship Manager 3* cited on divorce papers from his ex-wife as a reason why she ditched him. There's only time in a man's life for so many things, and it seems she didn't figure in them.



BORN TO BE WILD

Another sad *Everquest* story – this game should be banned for creating a new breed of gaming geeks who have lost touch with reality. A woman was rushed to hospital in America to give birth to her first child (all together now, ahhhhhh).

Around that time her husband was engrossed deep in a huge battle with some demon in the game and couldn't tear himself away. So off he went to the hospital with his laptop under his arm so he could carry on gaming while his wife got on with dropping the sprog.

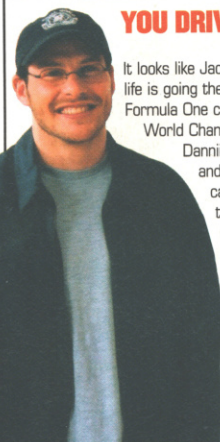
Our question is: how did he manage to play online when hospitals don't let you use mobile phones?



YOU DRIVE ME MAD!

It looks like Jacques Villeneuve's love life is going the same way as his Formula One career. The former F1 World Champ had Aussie diva Dannii Minogue at his beck and call. But instead of cavorting with his top totty, he spent too much time playing online RPGs such as *Ultima* or *Everquest*.

It wasn't long before Ms Minogue left him to his Orcs and Goblins. Jacques, mate, we really have to talk.



FOR THE LOVE OF LARA

A lot of people develop a soft spot for game characters – we all love the likes of Sonic and Mario and who doesn't think Duke Nukem's a dude? But these two guys over in the States have taken their feelings for buxom bint Lara Croft to previously unheard of heights, collecting every form of Lara merchandise known to man, including a life-size dummy. We don't even want to hear what they do with that.

For proof, check out their VOLC website at <http://volc.times.net/main.html> to discover just how far they have taken it.



CVG RECKONS

Games are cool. Changing your name to PlayStation 2 is not. And while we aren't recommending you go out and

tattoo Rayman all over your butt, we'd love to hear what you've done in the name of games. Write to us at the usual address.

BANJO-TOOIE™



Banjo and Kazooie are back, and



for the first time ever they can separate



as they tackle wild new worlds.



NINTENDO 64

Sometimes you need to split up to get the job done.

REST
ROOMS

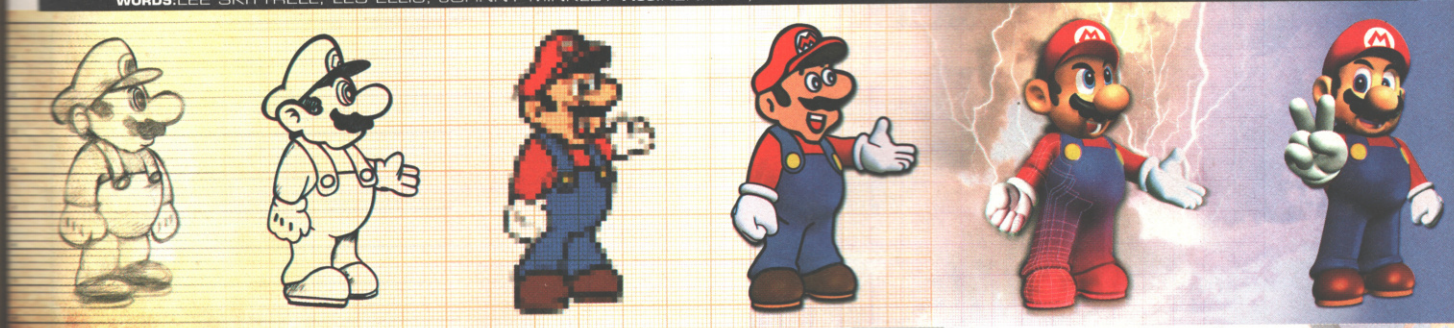


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CE SP

ADVANTAGE

WORDS: LEE SKITTRELL, LES ELLIS, JOHNNY MINKLEY PICS: KENNY P. DAN TRENT ILLUSTRATIONS: JOE ROBERTS SCREENSHOTS: VARIOUS



MARIO

PALM PERFECT

We compare Advance with Color to show you just how cool Nintendo's new handheld really is. It's your one-sto

SUPPORT

GAME BOY ADVANCE:

32-Bit ARM with embedded memory
2 AA batteries lasting 15 hours

GAME BOY COLOR:

8-Bit Z80
2 AA batteries lasting 10 hours

Every good console needs great games to succeed, and what better way to ensure a steady stream of killer titles than to provide as much power under the hood as possible. GBA boasts four times as much power as GBC, though as *Pokémon* proved, less bits doesn't have to mean less gameplay. In spite of its 32-bit joy, GBA doesn't automatically lend itself to 3D development. Initial 3D-style effects will be of a SNES Mode-7 variety as with *F-Zero*, but we've seen prototype proper 3D engines running on GBA dev kits and, in fact, multiplayer *Doom* has been confirmed for GBA. Developers are still managing amazing things with GBC so the potential for GBA is pretty huge.

LOOKS

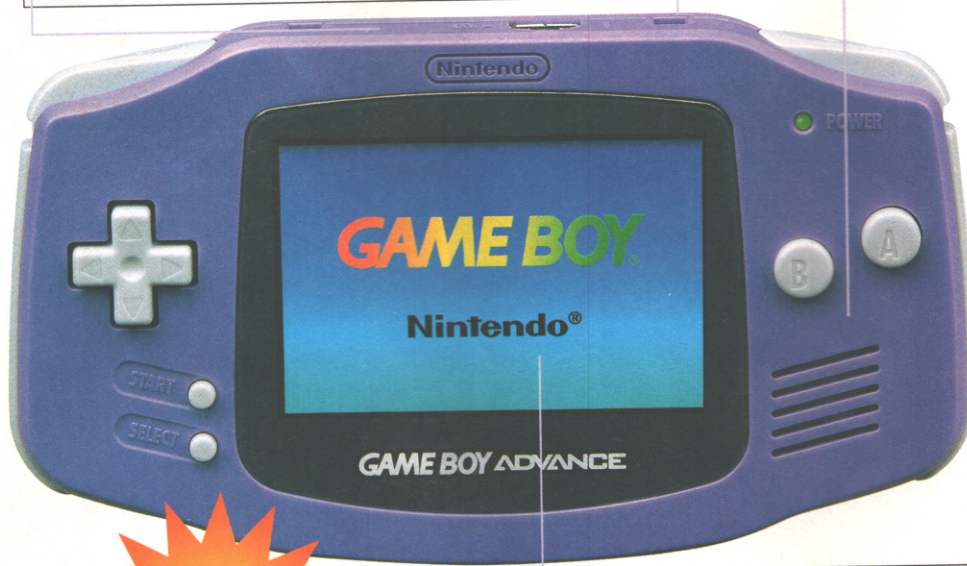
GAME BOY ADVANCE:

Eight-way d-pad
A, B, Start and Select buttons
L and R shoulder buttons
Dimensions 82h x 145w x 25d (mm)

GAME BOY COLOR:

Eight-way d-pad
A, B, Start and Select buttons
Dimensions 133h x 75w x 27d (mm)

So you thought GBC looked sexy as hell with its multiple colours? Well, after feasting your eyes on GBA you'll never want to go back to the chunky coloured GBC housebrick. GBA comes in three subtly sexy flavours: Indigo (opaque purple), Arctic (white) and Glacier (transparent purple). Unlike NeoGeo Pocket Color, none of the buttons are microswitched, but frankly that isn't a problem. GBA also has two more buttons than GBC, positioned on the unit's shoulders and using them takes only a little getting used to. In no time at all, playing games with the L and R buttons feels as natural as taking your daily dump.



ACTUAL
SIZE

SCREEN

GAME BOY ADVANCE:

SCREEN SIZE - 41mm x 61mm
RESOLUTION - 240 x 160 pixels
COLOURS - 511 simultaneous
PALETTE - 32,678

GAME BOY COLOR:

SCREEN SIZE - 39mm x 44mm
RESOLUTION - 160 x 140 pixels
COLOURS - 56 simultaneous
PALETTE - 32,000

Nintendo's new dream machine could have the power to bring the moon crashing to Earth under its sexy plastic casing, but without a decent screen it would all be for nowt. As previous handheld failures have proved, screen is everything. The fact that GBA's screen is not back-lit is actually fab news for portable players as back-lit screens chomp through batteries in no time at all. GBA's screen is spot-on and the height/width ratio makes for some unexpectedly wide-screen thrills. Resolution is crisp and sharp, even when Mario and pals are bombing their way across the screen at high speeds. It works just like the GBC screen in that it needs a good light source behind you while you play.



LECTION

ur one-stop shop for GBA info a-go-go!

CARTS

GAME BOY ADVANCE:

Dimensions 34h x 60w x 9d (mm)

GAME BOY COLOR:

Dimensions 65h x 52w x 7d (mm)

Check out our pics of GBA carts compared to GBC. Aren't they wee? The new carts are the same width as a GBC cartridge but just half the height. This means that while GBA carts sit snugly in the compact body of the console, GBC carts stick out of the console by a good three centimeters. Bah! All but a tiny fraction of obscure GB and GBC releases will work on GBA, so you'd best get used to that weird overhang. Very good news though is that if you buy an import console from Japan now, it'll run games from all regions, including Europe when GBA is launched here. Yes!



YOU WANT MORE?

Game Boy Advance gives you a lot more than just a tasty new screen and a few more buttons to tinker with. Check out what else this beauty can do...

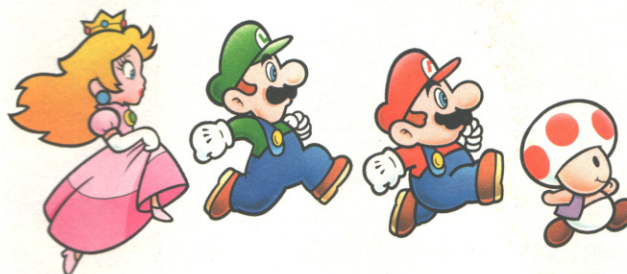
LINK ME UP, BUTTERCUP

It's all true! Four players can link up for multiplayer in some GBA games using just one cartridge. *F-Zero*, *Kuru Kuru Kururin* and *Mario Advance* use it for four-player Mario Bros Classic action, but *F-Zero* is limited to one track, though more cartridges mean more tracks. *Mario Kart Advance* should also have it. The bad news is that not all multiplayer games will use this feature (including *Mr Driller 2*) as the game has to be programmed for it and memory intensive titles will require more than one cartridge – as will Color games.



MAMA MIA!

Remember that light-headed, woozy feeling of gamesplaying-dreams-come-true the first time you fired up *Super Mario 64* and heard "It's A Me, A'Mario"? Well, get ready to feel it all over again with *Super Mario Advance* 'cos there's speech galore. The sound quality of GBA is pretty impressive and the unit is much louder than GBC. Plug a pair of headphones in and the awesome stereo effects will blow you away.



COMPATABILITY QUIBBLES

Now that we've got our grubby mitts on GBA we can tell you finally which of your old peripherals will work on your new handheld. Follow our advice to avoid blowing up your sexy new console and thus being branded a buffoon for the rest of your gamesplaying life.

LINK CABLES

Original link cables from the very first breezeblock Game Boy won't work as the plugs are too fat. Game Boy Color cables will work fine, but only on original GB and GBC games. They won't link up your GBA games.



WORM LIGHTS

GBC Worm Lights will work on GBA but they are so much dimmer as to be rendered useless. It's something to do with the GBA expansion socket pumping out power at a much lower level than GBC, so unless you're in a really dark room, you won't notice much difference.



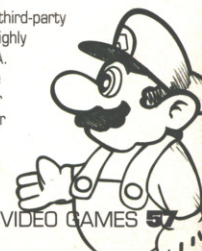
MAGNIFIER LIGHTS

Magnifier and light units won't work because there's nowhere to clip the thing on. And the magnifier won't work properly because the screens are different shapes. Wait for the official option – it's sure to be magic.



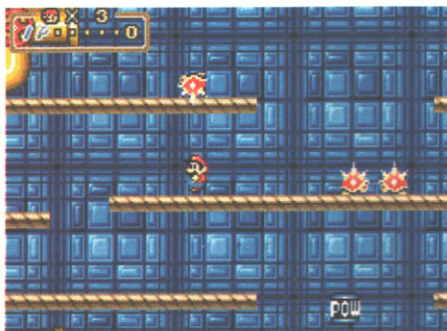
A/C ADAPTER

Don't do it! By using a third-party GBC A/C adapter it's highly likely you'll fry your GBA. Unless you're using the official Jap A/C adapter with a step-down power converter, we'd advise against using any mains power source.



THE GAMES

Jap players had a fine choice of games when GBA launched there in March. Here's the big hitters...



Experience classic Mario Bros. action in the palm of your hand

MARIO ADVANCE

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4, one cart

IMPORT FRIENDLY?: It's *Mario!* No problems at all

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Mario Advance, a version of *Super Mario Bros. 2*, is widely regarded as the worst *Super Mario* game ever. Good job it's still head and shoulders above the vast majority of other platformers, then. *Super Mario Bros. 2* was never really a *Mario* game in the first place, being an obscure Japanese title called *Doki Doki Panic*, with Mario et al added in later for Western release. The 'proper' *Super Mario Bros. 2* was considered too hard for Western gamers and only launched in Japan originally. Thus, for those familiar with the feel of the perky plumber's other titles, the experience of playing *Mario Advance* is an odd one. Mario pulling turnips out of the ground is wrong, kids.

THE MAGNIFICENT 7

Thankfully, this initially uncomfortable sensation is swiftly removed as you realise that, irrespective of its origins, *Mario Advance* is skill. Phew! What we have here is essentially a tweaked version of *Super Mario Bros. 2* as it appeared in the souped-up *Mario All-Stars* package on the SNES. Rather than wheeling off a straight port though, the Big N has added loads of cool Mode-7 graphical effects, such as enemies that scale in and out of the screen when killed. There's a considerable amount of speech in here as well, some of which is amazing, some which grates like fingernails on a blackboard. "Oh, Mama Mia!"

WORTH PLAYING?

It's not a patch on *Mario 3* or *Mario World*, but it's still an entertaining, challenging game in its own right. It won't take forever to complete, but there's plenty in here to keep you coming back time and again.

What really makes *Mario Advance* rock though is the completely brilliant multiplayer battle mode that is an almost life-changing experience with four-players involved. The other *Mario* platformers are still some way off, but this should more than fill the void until the real masterpieces make their appearances.

Good *Mario* game plus awesome multiplayer game = four stars.

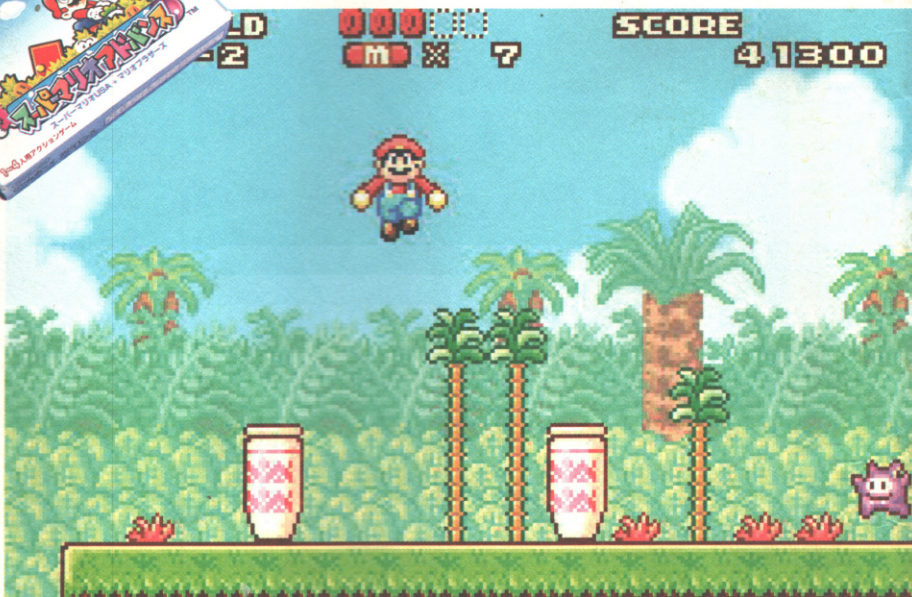
★★★★



"Mama Mia! I am a dead"



Grab that mushroom to add an extra heart to your energy bar



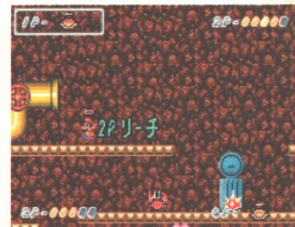
Make Mazza duck down for a couple of secs, then hit A and he'll pull-off an enormous leap, helping you to grab those hard-to-reach bonuses



Four times the fun with these Mario faves



Squash the little sods with this whopper



Ladies and gentleman, we give you... the bin





MULTIPLAYER: 1-4, one cart

IMPORT FRIENDLY: Hardly any Jap text

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The maddest and most original puzzle game in ages. Guide a spinning spaceship through multiple manic mazes to the goal at the end, making sure you don't smack into the sides. Like the best puzzlers, it's simple yet fiendish and there are obstacles and pick-ups to trouble your head. Throw in multilayer race games off one cart and you've got yourself a real treat.

WORTH PLAYING?

Kuru Kuru is a fantastic puzzler and while later levels get wickedly tough, you can barely tear yourself away. Perfect for a quick hit as well as having enough depth for prolonged sessions, it's one of the most wildly addictive games ever: Just the kind of original masterpiece needed to mark a new era in handheld gaming.

★★★★

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4, one cart

IMPORT FRIENDLY: lots of text but mostly OK

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Oh my god, it's *F-Zero*, complete with Mode-7 tricks and multiplayer games that even the SNES version couldn't manage. Futuristic sci-fi racing doesn't come better. The action is so fast and tracks so winding that just surviving to cross the line is tough enough. With loads of different classes of vehicle and tracks to master, this will last you ages.

WORTH PLAYING?

The ancient SNES game is still remembered fondly by veteran gamers and this version refreshes the legend, pushing it a little further with a new four-player mode. The racing is more than a generation leap over what has come before on handhelds – it's *that* smooth and fast. It's not often a blast from the past comes back better than ever while being much the same game, but this has.

★★★★

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2, two carts req.

IMPORT FRIENDLY: No language probs

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

He was solo on PSone and DC, but for GBA arcade puzzler *Mr Driller* goes into a two-player frenzy. Gameplay basics are the same: drill through blocks to reach the bottom before you run out of air or get squashed. Gameplay's simple to pick up and impossible to put down.

WORTH PLAYING?

With new challenge modes and special blocks that can even flip the screen, *Driller 2* on GBA offers much more than its big brothers, including that cool two-player mode. It's perfect if you fancy a quick five-minute gaming frenzy, while those challenge modes will happily take care of any spare hours you have going. Instantly playable, even in Japanese. So get it and... erm... dig it.

★★★★★

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4, four carts req.

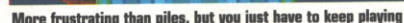
IMPORT FRIENDLY: Pretty self-explanatory

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

GBA gets all revved up with *All Japan GT*, which will be called *GT Championship* when released over here, and it's really not at all bad. *GT* is kinda old school in its gameplay and we were disappointed to find it doesn't feature the Mode-7 3D trickery of *F-Zero*. Still, the racing action is solid enough and it looks pretty lovely.

WORTH PLAYING?

GT Championship is fairly generic stuff but the wealth of options and modes of play served up here go some way to making up for the lack of originality. Surprisingly the cars handle well and, for once in a racing game, you'll actually want to beat your way through the championship game. But the lack of speed makes this a disappointing start and is no indication of what GBA is capable of.



COMING SOON

We all know *Mario Kart Advance* is steaming our way like a 180mph F1 car on wheels oiled with a thousand players' drool, but what else is there to get excited about on GBA's horizon? Take a peek...

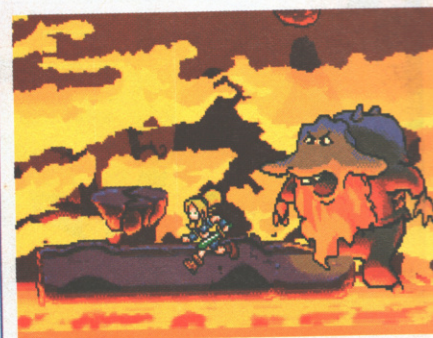
LADY SIA

OUTSUMMER BYTDK MEDIACTIVE

As well as being the easiest thing on the eyes we've seen in ages, this game is also a completely original GBA exclusive



▲ You can see for yourselves just how fantastic and distinctive this looks. Take control of shapeshifting beauty Lady Sia



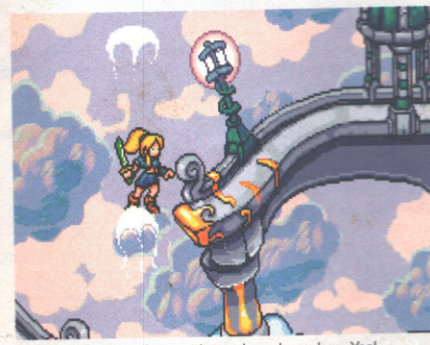
▲ A totally new adventure set in a whole new world. All good



▲ Check out Lady Sia's cool jump animation. Looks like Frosty The Snowman's losing his snowballs



▲ Tons of different weapons to try out and a vast collection of magic spells and transformations to play around with



▲ Fast-paced platform action and puzzles galore. Yes!



▲ Big bosses anyone? It's a walrus with jet engines strapped to his back. Ho-hum. Just another typical day in the Arctic

STREET FIGHTER 2

OUTTBC BYCAPCOM

Die-hard SF2 fans are probably already saving for this one. As you can see, visually it's a handheld peach



▲ A GBA version could be class - let's just hope it's not just yet another cash-in on the tired old 2D fighter formula



▲ We've yet to get our hands on code, so quite how the SF2 moves will be executed on GBA is still a mystery.



▲ The shoulder buttons could logically be extra attack buttons but just how natural will it feel to pull off combos?



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

OUT/UNE PLATFORM/ACTIVISION



▲ Isometric view rather than a side-on one. Looks cool

SPIDER-MAN

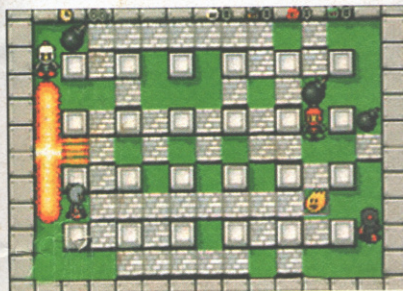
OUT/BC PLATFORM/ACTIVISION



▲ Expect lots of Mode-7 effects to spice up the action

BOMBERMAN

OUT/GBA PLATFORM/TBC



▲ "Four-player link-up? Quick, get us a sedative. Aargh!"

BREATH OF FIRE

OUT/BC PLATFORM/CAPCOM

This handheld outing for Ryu and his dragon-training chums is an enhanced version of the SNES classic



▲ Hailed as one of the best RPG series ever made, *Breath of Fire* on GBA is definitely one to watch



▲ You'll be able to form parties of adventurers in *Breath of Fire* and our heroes will discover hidden powers within themselves, which are called dragon powers



▲ Players can expand and train these powers and then use them in battle. Pray for a UK release

FINAL FIGHT

OUT/BC PLATFORM/CAPCOM

Another fighting classic from the SNES days and just as beloved as *Street Fighter 2* in the eyes of many



▲ Two players will be able to trek through the badlands, kicking off with anyone dumb enough to stand in their way



▲ This GBA version is said to be a spot-on port of the arcade original, with loads of extra bonuses packed in for good measure. Getting excited yet?



▲ Scrolling beat 'em ups are something of a rarity these days, but can this offer more than just nostalgic thrills?

CVG RECKONS

For the first time since the launch of N64, GBA is a console that's easily lived up to its pre-launch hype. Never mind the fact that the machine is released with the weakest *Mario* game; never mind that GBC cartridges poke out the top. GBA offers some of the finest launch thrills you'll ever see. The machine itself is deceptively small – no bigger than a GBC – but with 32-bit power. From the huge screen and shoulder buttons to the subtle design and ickle carts, it's all pure Nintendo perfection. That's not us gushing and over-excited either. Holding and playing a GBA is one of those things in life that just feels right. Why? Nintendo has had years to hone and refine its new handheld dream. And we love it.

LINK-UP JOY

Any doubts we had about the choice of *Mario* game to launch GBA withered away as soon as we sampled the game's multiplayer delights. As our website brothers said on launch day: "The world is not ready". Like *F-Zero* and *Kuru Kuru*, *Mario Advance* requires just one cart for link-up games. This fact alone is enough to stun players into awed silence. But when the multiplayer games are as fantastic

to play and easy to set up as they actually are, you realise that multiplayer gaming could become more important than single player handheld adventures on GBA. We're weak at the knees at the thought.

COUNTDOWN BEGINS

The very best news is that UK players will be able to get their hands on arguably the most exciting console the world has yet seen on June 22 – just 11 days after the American launch. We may have to wait longer than the rest of the world for GameCube (see the story on page 16) but it seems the Big N still loves Europe enough to give us GBA almost simultaneously with the Yanks.

The list of ten launch games sounds very promising and new titles may well be added in the countdown to GBA-Day. If you can't wait, an import GBA will cost you £150 or under and £30 to £50 per cartridge. But while there's no word yet on a fixed UK launch price, £79.99 seems to be the industry's best guess, with games around £30. That seems fine to us and from June 22 onwards you won't be able to move without seeing someone playing GBA.





AL GAME BOY ADVANCE SPECIAL GAME BOY ADVANCE SPECIAL GAME BO

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09069 181889

Win Pokemon Gold & Silver



09069 181883

Win £150 of Games



For the console of your choice!
09069 181882 Instant Win

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Pokemon Card
396 Cards!



09069 181881

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09069 181885 Instant Win

Rock Goodies!

Includes signed picture,
T-Shirt, Video.

09009 121331
Instant Win!



Win Wrestling Tickets for Earls Court

See the superstars of wrestling on
the 31st May. Closes 2nd May

09069 102899



Wrestling Games!

Win £100 of top
Console titles

09009 121332
Instant Win!



Wrestling Goodies!

Win Videos, Posters,
Books and lots more

09009 121333
Instant Win!



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phone and let the fun begin. Put a screen
graphic on it, or a new tune and make it yours.

09069 102893 Carriers conditions apply

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Choose either HMV or top up cards for
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Call this number, enter your mobile number and
your mobile may be picked as the winner!
Winners will be chosen at random

09069 102894

Win a Ericsson T20 Phone!

Win this T20 "pay as you go" mobile
phone with chatboard for texting your
mates quickly. Carriers terms apply.

09069 102898 Instant Win



Win the NEW PSone!

Plus screen when available!

09069 181886
Instant Win



Win PS2 PlayStation

Comes with a great game,
DVD Remote & Memory Card

09069 102890
Instant Win



Win Laptop

With 56K Modem!

09069 102892
Instant Win



Win Pentium 4 PC!

09069 102895
Instant Win



PRIZE BUSTER

THE HIGHER THE SCORE THE BIGGER THE PRIZE!

Score 30 points or more to start winning! Win Dreamcasts, Mini HiFis, Wrestling T
Shirts, Nintendo Games, Databanks, Video Players, PlayStation 2's, Mobile Phones,
Nintendos, Colour TV's and a top prize of a Pentium III computer.

09009 121330 Instant Win

SHOOT OUT!

Answer questions then score SIX goals to win from a great choice of prizes

* 14" Colour TV! * Video Recorder! * PSone PlayStation! * Stereo System! *
Stunt Bike * Nintendo 64! + other Instant Win prizes if you score 4 or 5 goals!

09009 121339 Instant Win

Win Britney Signed Picture!

Actually signed by Britney!

09069 102896



Win Home Cinema System

09069 181888
Instant Win



Win 2 Robbie Tickets!

On the 21st July at
the National Bowl.

09069 102897



Win Nike Shox Trainers

The top trainers out there

09069 181887 Instant Win



WWF Smackdown 2
09063 608061

Tony Hawk's 2
09063 646581

Medal of Honour 2
09063 608066

Driver 2
09063 608062

FIFA 2001
09063 608068

Digimon World
09063 646585

RED HOT CHEATS

Pokemon Gold
09063 646583

Dave Mirra's BMX
09063 608069

Tenchu 2
09063 646584

Tomb Raider 5
09063 608063

Gran Turismo 2
09063 646588

WWF No Mercy
09063 608065

Bino Crisis 2
09063 646589

Final Fantasy 9
09063 608067

Pokemon Yellow
09063 646582

Spiderman
09063 646587



For more cheats call The Cheat Machine on 09063 608060. If you are 16 or over, you can call for longer Cheats on 09063 646580. (Calls cost 60p per minute)

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also visit the site if you want to claim a prize, get some wrestling links or visit our winners' gallery!

Calls cost up to £3, so please ask permission from the person who pays the phone bill.

Most competitions require a tone phone. If a competition is marked INSTANT WIN then you will be told if you are a winner during your call. Instant Win competitions have questions and a game to decide if you are an instant winner. Other competitions involve questions with tiebreaker and end on the 31st May 2001 (unless otherwise indicated), after which they may be replaced by a similar service on the same number. Actual designs may vary. Accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Fanz may use data, received in your call, to make offers to you. If you DO NOT wish this, call 08700 101598. If you would like rules or winners' names, see our web site or send a request with stamped addressed envelope. If you win an INSTANT prize send your claim, with Claim Number to: www.fanz.co.uk, PO Box 28 Northampton NN1 5DS. Helpline: 01604 491185 Winners Line 08700 101597.

CODE	BOXER
MECCA	Ashy Knucks
AUSTIN	Ray Austin
NELSON	Trevor Nelson
JGIAMBI	Jason Giambi
HATCHER	Charles Hatcher
OSUNA	Bernado Osuna
DEFIAGBN	David Defiagbon
MRBARRY	Barry Sanders
ZITO	Chuck Zito
BOSTICE	David Bostice
DEMART	David DeMartini
BAILEY	Joe Mesi
JBOTTI	John Botti
JRSEAU	Jr Seau
OWNOLAN	Owen Nolan
STEEF	Steve Francis



All the cheats should be entered after going to the Main Menu and highlighting Arcade Mode

UNLOCK DAMIAN BLACK: Press Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Right, Right, Right, Left, Left, Left UNLOCK KEMO CLAW: Press Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left



YOUR TIPS

MONEY



DREAMCAST

SONIC SHUFFLE

Thanks to Max Narayan from Esher for these gems.

UNLOCK NIGHTS: Set DC system clock to December 24th.

UNLOCK BIG: Buy all the Tails Pictures in Sonic's Room.

UNLOCK SUPER SONIC: Buy all the Sonic Pictures in Sonic's Room.



Unlock a whole load of new characters to spice up your party game life

PLAYSTATION

SPYRO: YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Steven Potts has found some red hot cheats for everyone's favourite purple skateboarding dragon.

99 LIVES: Pause and press Right, Left, Right, Left, Up, Up, Up, Up, Circle.

BIG HEAD SPYRO: Pause and press Up, R1, Up, R1, Up, R1, Circle, Circle.

SQUID SKATEBOARD: Pause and press Up, Up, Left, Left, Right, Right, Down, Down, Circle, Square.

FLAT SPYRO: Pause and press Left, Right, Left, Right, L1, R1, L1, R1, Square, Circle.

EXTRA HIT POINT: Pause and press Circle, R1, Circle L1, Circle R2, Circle L2, Circle.

SPARX TREASURE FINDING: Pause and hit Right, Right, Left, Left, Right, Right, Left, Left, Circle, Circle, Circle.



Life as a dragon is easier with a few cheats

CRASH BASH

Julie Kotto has found a way to unlock a secret in Crash Bash and she's kindly shared it with all of us. Sweet.

To unlock a cool little hidden Spyro 3 demo go to the title screen and press L1, R1, Square and Start. Bob's your uncle.

NINTENDO 64

STAR WARS: EPISODE 1 BATTLE FOR NABOO

Pac Hamya from Birkenhead is a manic Star Wars freak, or so he tells us, and he's sent us some

killer cheats for the latest Star Wars game. Banging in a few of these should see to it all your problems with the Dark Side are more or less solved.

These codes can all be entered by going to the Main Menu, selecting Options and then selecting Passcodes.

CODE	WHAT YOU GET
PATHETIC	Infinite lives
TALKTOME	Developer commentary
RUAGIRL?	Pink ship
OVERLOAD	Pumped up craft stats
DROIDEKA	Advanced shields
LOVEHUTT	View the Naboo game creators
KOOLSTUF	Unlock concept art
NASTYMD	Hard Mode

PC CD-ROM

REVENANT

Check out these monster mashing cheats to make your adventuring life easier from James Troy in Lincoln.

During gameplay press Enter to bring up the typing prompt and then type in one of the following codes.



CODE	WHAT YOU GET
alreadydead	God Mode
potionsnloptions	Get lots of potions
alcherry	999999 Gold
alcherynfinnit	Unlimited Gold
godsubzero	Unlimited Ice Arrows
nahkranoth	Kill monster with one hit
noamnesia	Makes character level 30
gimmiesomegrub	Get 5 of every food type

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CALLS TO THE ABOVE NUMBER COST 60P PER MINUTE

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09066 095 721

Calls only cost 60p per minute to this number

MOBILE PHONE ACCESS:

0700 5900 615

INTERNATIONAL ACCESS: +44 (0)700 5900 020

TO SAVE TIME DURING YOUR CALL YOU MAY PRESS
* TO RESTART SERVICE OR * TO MOVE BACK A STEP



Please ensure you have permission from the bill payer. Calls to the under 16's number will cost no more than £3.00, and will end after 5 minutes. There is no maximum call time for the over 16's number. Please put comments or queries in writing to Interactive Telcom Ltd, 8 Grants Walk, R25 5AA, or call our

Customer Service: 08700 885 656 (BT National Rate Applies)

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Gnawing your teeth to stumps with gaming frustration? Save on dental bills by sharing all your game troubles with **The Masters** at the address nestling neatly in the bottom right-hand corner.



Paper Mario: Loads of handy secrets for this N64 classic

PAPER MARIO

I've heard that there are lots of cool secrets to find in *Paper Mario*, including the chance to play as Classic Mario. Can you save me some time and give me a few hints where to look because I don't want to miss anything?

Ivan Franklin, Oxford

To play as Classic Mario, go into Boo's Mansion, through the door on the right, onto the box in front of the vase, and then jump into the vase. You'll turn into Classic Mario accompanied by Classic Mario music. Another handy secret to find is the Secret Pipes warp. First you have to get the Stone Hammer in the Dry Dry Ruins. Go back to Toad Town and look for the pipe with the Private sign near to Tayce T's home. Go down the pipe and break the stone with the hammer. Go through the tunnel and get ready to fight a beast. Three pipes then emerge from the floor. The right one goes to Goomba City, the middle to Kupa Village and the left to Dry Dry Outpost.

Want more secrets? How about a hidden games room? Head for Lil' Oink Farm, just south of Toad Town. As soon as you reach the farm, head left down the narrow path. Hit the tree with the hammer and a pipe will emerge. Go down the pipe to find the Playroom. You must have a silver or gold card to play the games.

HARVEST MOON

Please could you tell me how I get Karen's black heart to turn red? I give her loads of jewels and wine every day but I can only get her heart to turn purple. What does it take to get her to like me?

Dave Champion, Hackbridge

There are plenty of steps to take to make Karen love you and turn her black heart to red. Unlike most



Shadow Of Memories: This PS2 masterpiece can get a tad tricky

women, Karen isn't too impressed with jewels, so you can stop showering her with sparklies. When you give her wine, wrap it first in pretty paper. She likes that. Karen also loves truffles, which you can find behind the trees at Mother's Lake. Moon Drop Flowers will help to soften her up, as will junk food, especially Fries and Pizza. Give her all these goodies and make sure you talk to her once in a while to check her Status and she'll soon agree to marry you, you lucky devil.

SHADOW OF MEMORIES

I've tried twice to save Mr Eckhart's wife from being murdered in the street in Chapter 6 but each time she ignores my warnings and walks away to meet a sticky end in the snow. Spooky weirdo Homunculous has told me to give up trying to help. Should I listen to the creep or is there some way to prevent this horrific happening?

Mike Deeson, Kidderminster

Ignore the creep. As soon as you land back in the present day after the second attempt to save Miriam's life, use your Digipad and select the destination marked 'Can that woman be saved'. After talking to Miriam again, follow her when she walks on ahead. You'll then have to chase her through the streets when she starts running away. Eventually you'll get the opportunity to save her from the mugger and watch some interesting plot developments unfold.

JEDI POWER BATTLES

How do I get the double bladed Darth Maul lightsaber?

Ashley Phillips, Hornchurch

You have to finish the game twice as Obi-Wan, twice as Panaka and once as the Queen with the setting on Jedi

computer and video

Games GUARANTEED WINNERS

Codes! We know you want them, we know you need them. That's why we've searched the world for the ripest, juiciest cheats. If you think you can do better, send in some cheats of your own to Easy Money on page 64. You get a tenner if we print 'em.



DREAMCAST

■ NBA 2001

Enter the following codes for their corresponding cheats
SECRET TEAMS: vc.
BIG HEADS: Helium Brain.
MONSTER PLAYERS: alienbrain.
BALL CAMERA: betheball.
CHANGE APPEARANCE: radical.
COOL CLOTHES: 70olive.
TAUNT: sohappyy.
SIGH MODE: Not so happy.
INFECTED PLAYERS: tivus.
THE CURE: The Cure!
SEGA SPORTS PLAYERS: First enter the hidden heams code then any of the following: Marrinson/ Stricker/ Dobson.



NINTENDO 64

■ SCOOPY DOO: CLASSIC CREEP CAPERS

Enter the following code during gameplay while you are controlling Sixties throwback Shaggy.
UNLIMITED COURAGE: Hold L and press C-Up, C-Left, C-Down, C-Up, C-Down, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Down.



PLAYSTATION

■ BLADE

Enter codes at the Main Menu and activate them in-game by pressing Start to access the Cheat Menu.

UNLIMITED LIFE: Press Left, Left, Left, Right, L2, L1, R2, R1.
ALL ITEMS: Press Right, Left, Up, Down, L2, L2, R2, R2.
UNLIMITED AMMO: Press Down, Right, Up, Left, L2, L1, R2, R1.

■ WCV BACKSTAGE ASSAULT

Enter the following codes at the Main Menu.
INDESTRUCTIBLE WEAPONS: L1, R1, L1, R1, Square, Square.
INFINITE STAMINA: R1, R1, Triangle, R1, R1, Triangle.
NEW WRESTLER SOUND: R1, L1, R1, L1, Triangle, Triangle.
ALL ITEMS: Press Right, Left, Up, Down, L2, L2, R2, R2.
UNLIMITED AMMO: Press Down, Right, Up, Left, L2, L1, R2, R1.

Mario Tennis:

mode. Save Jedi at the C nine times a Maul with hi

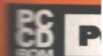
MARIO TENNIS

Mario Tenn handheld ei characters on my Gam Gold Racker Lucy Clark, To get Maric Singles and in the Game Wario, Bow Transfer Pak

KIRBY 64

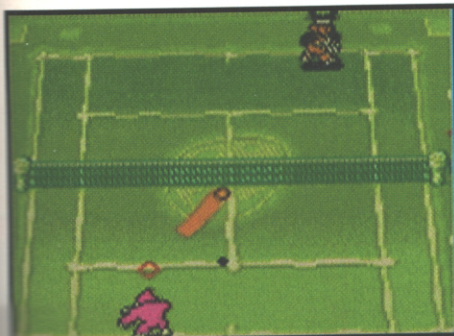
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■ RAZOR F UNLOCK AL screen pres



STAR TR

This might n Trek fans wil these cheats pressing Ent CODE kityashime shomether phonehome sandwhoops maCastepi quatumact



Mario Tennis: Want to get all the N64 characters onto Game Boy?

mode. Save your game and then highlight the female Jedi at the Character Selection screen. Press Select nine times and the female Jedi should change to Darth Maul with his double-bladed lightsaber.

MARIO TENNIS

Mario Tennis on Game Boy Color is the pinnacle of handheld entertainment, but can I get all the characters from the N64 game and play with them on my Game Boy? Also, how do I get the precious Gold Racket?

Lucy Clark, Runcorn

To get Mario and Peach you'll have to win both the Singles and Doubles tournaments in Mario Tour Mode in the Game Boy Color version. If you want to unlock Mario, Bowser, Yoshi and Luigi, you'll need to use a Transfer Pak with the N64 version of the game.

KIRBY 64: THE CRYSTAL SHARDS

I've collected all the Crystal Shards but I keep getting shredded by the final boss. Help!

Al Travers, Tonbridge

Hmm, we guess you must have bought this one on N64 import since it's not due out in the UK until July – around a year later than was expected. Anyway, this old-school Dark Star boss is easy to beat once you know how, but ain't they all? First use the Crystal Shard attack on the eye, whilst dodging his attacks. Keep pounding away at the eye until the view changes and you're over the top of Dark Star's head. Shoot out the crown on top of the head then move to the side where you can see a green tail. Attack the tail, avoiding the poisonous gas. Next, you'll be back facing the eye again. Follow the same pattern to take out the eye, crown and tail for the second and final time. Game over Dark Star!



Summoner: That final boss making you want to smash up your PS2?

SUMMONER

I'm at the end of the game and the Demon of Darkness. Just when I'm getting ready to give him a good pasting, he flies away and I can't reach him. Sam Pritchard, Coventry

Pummel the Demon hard whilst he's still on the altar. When he flies away, summon the Celestial Samurai and cast Protect on the party. Change your character to Fleece, go up the stairs and fight the Knights. Then, using Jakhar, head for the balcony and attack the Demon. When the Demon returns to the altar, follow him and attack again. Use Rosalind to cast Protect and Vitalise throughout the boss battle to keep everyone healthy. When you've whooped the Demon's ass sufficiently he'll escape to the balcony. Head with Jakhar to the opposite balcony and fight yet more Knights. Now change to Celestial Samurai or Joseph and attack the Demon on the balcony. When he runs for the altar again, follow him and keep on attacking with your two free characters (Fleece should still be fighting the Knights and Rosalind should still be healing the party). Now you have the Demon trapped, he'll start to change form so it's vital to keep healing, protecting and attacking. If you've got this far, you should have the necessary gaming chops to survive the pace.

WWF NO MERCY

How do I get Linda McMahon?

The Undertaker, Nottingham

Play as a Newcomer in Heavyweight Mode and win the Royal Rumble. Then win all Chapters except Chapter 8, which you must lose. Win the tenth Chapter and fight the Champion. If you follow these steps and successfully beat the champion, Linda McMahon should appear, complete with corporate shoulder pads.

EXPERT ADVICE



Final Fantasy 9: How to get Garnet's secret name

FINAL FANTASY 9

I've heard that there's a way to find out Garnet's secret name in FF9. Can you tell me what it is?

Kid Rock, Taunton

When you get the chance to explore in the airship on Disc 4, head for Madain Sari, making sure Garnet/Dagger and Eiko are in your party. Talk to Lani in the kitchen. She'll scarper, then head back out to the world map and re-arrange your party, removing Garnet/Dagger and Amarant. Make sure Eiko is still in the party. Go back and talk to Lani in Madain Sari. She'll tell you about the strange words in the secret room behind her. Enter the room and read the message about Time. Head across town to the Eidolon wall and follow the advice of the message. Walk around the room once in a clockwise direction until you return to the entrance, then turn around and walk round the room in an anti-clockwise direction. Keep repeating this back and forth nine times. Each time you do it correctly you should hear a sound. On the ninth time, all HP/MP should be replenished. Then examine all the Eidolons on the wall, moving in a clockwise direction. Do this twice. On your second trip you'll be able to examine one of the Eidolons you couldn't before, revealing Garnet's secret name.

HARVEST MOON 2

This just has to be the best game to hit the Game Boy Color since Pokémon, but I can't figure out how to get sheep.

Sheepless Farmer, Hayes

You're not the first *Harvest Moon 2* fan to ask about this. No matter how much grass you've sewn throughout your land, you won't get to raise any sheep until the grass behind the Sheep Pasture turns dark green and sprouts.

RAZOR FREESTYLE SCOOTER

UNLOCK ALL LEVELS: At the Level Selection screen press L2, R1, Square, Triangle, L2, L2.

PC CD-ROM

STAR TREK ARMADA

This might not be the world's best RTS, but Trekkers will get a few more hours of fun with these cheats. All codes should be keyed in after pressing Enter during gameplay.

CODE	WHAT YOU GET
cheesemaru	Mission Skip
cheesemoney	More Money
cheesehome	Multiplay Mode Chat List
cheesewhoopass	Limited Enemy AI
cheesetastewithreality	Enter Gamma Quadrant
cheesetopmored	Faster Ship Production

PLAYSTATION 2

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

CVG didn't rate this roaming beat 'em up all that highly but in its favour it does feature some of the highest body counts to date on PS2. All the codes below should be entered at the title screen.

UNLOCK 19 HIDDEN GENERALS: Square, Square, L1, L2, R1, R2, Square, Square. **UNLOCK ALL SHU GENERALS:** Square, R1, R1, R1, R1, R2, R2.

UNLOCK BGM TEST OPTION: R1, R1, R2, R2, L1, L1, L2, L2.

SILPHEED: THE LOST PLANET

When you start a new game you will be prompted to enter a name. Enter XACALITE to have access to all nine weapons right from the start.

GAME BOY COLOR

BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND

Fed up with the repetitive action? So skip levels...

LEVEL	PASSWORDS
LEVEL 2	BBVBB
LEVEL 3	CWBB
LEVEL 4	XBVBB
LEVEL 5	YVBB
LEVEL 6	GBVBB
LEVEL 7	HVBB
LEVEL 8	3BVBB
LEVEL 9	4VBB
LEVEL 10	LBVBB
LEVEL 11	MVBB
LEVEL 12	7BVBB
LEVEL 13	8VBB

Send all your questions to our address below. We'll print as many answers as we can, but we can't give personal replies via post.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, THE MASTERS, DENNIS PUBLISHING, 30 CLEVELAND ST, LONDON W1P

Send your letters to: Mailbag, Computer and Video Games, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Or email us at: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

STAR LETTER

PHACT OR PHICTION?

People look like their dogs, right? I reckon it's the same with *Phantasy Star Online*. Skinny players make anorexic characters, fat fekkers make beefcakes etc. Seeing as how I'm so fly in real life, my online character must be the biggest babe magnet on all the PSO servers.
Dr. Edd, via email

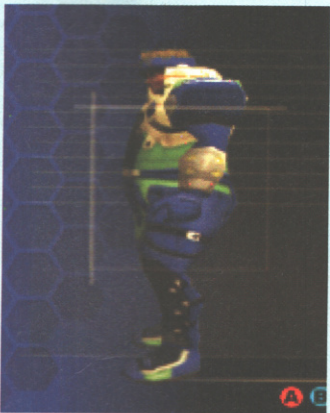
Yeah, right. So fly, in fact, that you forgot to include a pic of your character. Your theory also seems to come unstuck in the CVG offices, where the opposite seems to be true. Half the team prefer to play as females with eye patches, as opposed to the hairy-arsed he-men they undoubtedly are. Maybe there's something Freudian going on there.



JOHNNY
CHARACTER: Miss Wink
SEX: Female
VITAL STATISTICS: 36/24/36
CONCLUSION: Fantasy come true for CVG's cross-dressing king



LEE
CHARACTER: Fashion Crime
SEX: Male
VITAL STATISTICS: Tall, broad-shouldered, pot-bellied human
CONCLUSION: Not exactly Lee's twin



GBA-NSWERED

Can you play GBC games on GBA? If you can, then I'm gonna sell my GBC and buy GBA when it comes out. And are the Pokémon coming to GBA?

Ott Kekishev, Estonia

Yes. Good move. Yes. Any more questions?

BROTHERLY HATE

My younger brother and I had been beating seven shades out of each other on *Dead or Alive 2* on DC, when an overloaded power-point sparked a small fire. I rushed to turn off the console. All my brother did was moan that he was about to win. Huh! Next time I'll let him burn to death and he can have as many wins as he wants.
John Trew, Cardiff



As any good cheater knows, you never turn up an opportunity to claim victory, and letting your bruv burn to death in revenge seems just a tad harsh.

AW, SHUCKS

I'd just like to thank you for telling us about Ebay a while back. I have got about 15 N64 and 20 SNES games in the last two months, and most of them for under a fiver! They're all top class titles too. You've save me loads of money. Cheers, guys.

Chris Marshall, via email

MINGING

Your Star Letter in Issue 232 - floating air biscuits while playing is fun and

DREAMCASTUS INTERRUPTUS

What the hell is Sega playing at? Why is Sega stopping making consoles just in the midst of Dreamcast's finest hour, with games like *Phantasy Star* and *Shenmue*. I still do not own a DC but was planning to save up for one by July. Will they still be on the shelves then?

Paul Humpage, Willenhall

Yes, you should have no probs getting your mitts on a DC for a while yet - Sega has reportedly amassed a huge stockpile of the consoles and has around 60 new titles in the pipeline over the next year, so DC isn't about to disappear overnight.



sometimes works but what I like to do when my friends are over is take off my shoes and that usually does the trick.

Adam Sandler, via email

POKEPOSTAL

I'm writing to ask for help as my house is infested with Pokémon. There is a Weedle in my toilet, a Jynx in my bed (oh yeah, baby) and a Pikachu in my breadbin. I've tried everything, including shooting them with my laptop gun. I also tried capturing them with Pokéballs. Please send help.

Colin West, Glasgow.

P.S. I think you should have a Weirido Corner

You have some serious issues, Colin. But hey, you're on the road to recovery if you know you're weird...



Colin West, Glasgow

*"There is a Weedle in my toilet
and a Jynx in my bed"*

SONY PSYI

I have a pro anything wit and he hate into him and the new issi screenshots games, but smashed up hammer. An came into si

He was leap upon by my be able to us month. He k when I used to work out for him it ca said he want demanded a get a PS2 might do.
Alex Hill
Here's y
A) Sw
B) St
him t
it tak

"Phantasy Star Online is the first game in ages to actually live up to the hype"

Bob, via email



Shimmer: DC's finest hour? The debate continues...

SONY PSYCHO SOS

I have a problem: my mate will kill anything with the word Sony on it and he hates PS2. I try to talk sense into him and every month when I get the new issue of CVG I show him the screenshots and reviews of PS2 games, but he still thinks it should be smashed up with a very large hammer. Another one of my mates came into school this morning and said he had bought a PS2.



He was leapt upon by my mate and now he won't be able to use a controller for a month. He loves Nintendo, and even when I used the chart in Issue 230 to work out which console was best for him it came up with PS2. He still said he wants PS2 to die and demanded a re-test. I'm hoping to get a PS2 soon and fear what he might do. What should I do?

Alex Hillhouse, Wirral

Here's your options:

- A) Swap yer bud for a sane one.
- B) Strap him to a sofa and force him to watch you play PS2 until it takes him to the Third Place.

BOB THE FILTER

After being utterly disappointed by the likes of *Shenmue* a few months back, I was ecstatic when *Phantasy Star Online* was finally released - the one game worth buying a Dreamcast for. Not only is it a great game, but it's also the first game in a LONG time to actually be as good as all the hype suggested. However, I'd like to point your attention to the language censor that is present in the online mode. Here is a list of words that are filtered off:

Basement
Saturday
Shoes
Saltwater
Bob, via email

It ain't often loads of you spontaneously write to tell us about the quality of a new game, but you did for *PSO*, which speaks volumes for its quality. Except maybe the \$@! basement \$!%#@! language filter, eh Bob?

SCRATCH ONE MORE PS2

After reading the email from Mark Page in Issue 232 about his PS2 problems, I thought I'd tell you about an incident I witnessed in my local games shop. I overheard a guy talking to the store owner.

Apparently he had left a PS2 for examination because he said his discs had been scratched. He did not scratch them himself because I saw them testing some themselves in-store and they were badly damaged when ejected. The store gave him replacements, but could PS2 have even more problems?

Brian Corcoran, Kilkenny

AND ANOTHER... COUPLE

I'm now on my third PS2 since December 27. This machine is fine - the first two scratched discs. Fair play to Sony, they sent me new machines quickly by courier. My problem is getting them to replace the games that were destroyed. It's been a month and I've received nothing. Any advice?

Aidan Randle, via email

If you're not happy with Sony's customer service, try your local Trading Standards.

PEACE BE WITH YOU

I'm speechless, knocked for six, stunned. I've just had my best gaming experience EVER. I've just played *Phantasy Star Online*. Myself and three other players worked together on the Ruins level.



We chatted, helped each other out, kicked some Ragolian butt. It was amazing! The graphics, sound and gameplay are unbelievable. The feeling of togetherness and friendship this game creates is overwhelming. People of the world: play this game now!

RaikuDroid, Birmingham

Feel the power of online gaming. It's what the DC was supposed to be all about and why next-gen consoles are all going online. We'd forward your letter to Sega, but it's too late to make any difference. The only other downer - have you checked your phone bill lately?

INTO HYPE-RSPACE

Hype sucks ass. How many times have we been told about games that'll rock our world only to discover they're a stinking pair of pants? So here's my suggestion: games publishers should be legally forced to print the average review score they got in games mags together with the best and worst quotes. Then we could all make better informed decisions when we come to buy games. What do you think?

Anti-pantie, via email

You reckon you could persuade the suits in parliament to pass legislation like that? We don't think so. You'll just have to stick to reading CVG playtests and reviews.

WHO WROTE TO MAILBAG THIS MONTH

Eric R, Bolton; Mark Storey, Carlisle; David Brunn, Birmingham; Stin, Wales; Ryan Imray, Orton; Joe Williamson, via email; James Ballard, Southampton; Anta, via email; Adam Child, Preston; Mike Fretwell, via email; Chris Myers, via email; Adam Cale, Birmingham; Matthew, via email; Fudgy Cakes, via email; Nomadicwarrior, via email; Darren Joyce, via email; Tim George, Chesham; Chao Yu, Cambridge; Andrew Elington, via email, Anthony Cheng, via email complete with virus. Grt.

I LOVE XBOX

Why has Microsoft designed such a large and unwieldy joypad? It has way too many buttons for the average gamer. If you're gonna have two sticks on one pad, then put them both in the same place on both sides, not one higher than the other. Being a PlayStation fan, I feel Sony's pad is the most perfectly designed pad ever. It's thin body allows for a good grip and control. What makes the Xbox pad even worse is that it has two analogue triggers underneath - a problem inherited from the Dreamcast.

Metalhead Dan, via email

We'd have agreed with you right up until we actually played on it at Gamestock.



"Publishers should be forced to print the average review score"

Anti-pantie, via email

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REVIEWS



WHAT'S IMPORTANT

The Computer and Video Games Five Star Award is your guarantee of a great game. When you see the logo, it's like having an informed best mate recommend you a game.

HONEST Regardless of hype, reputation or advertising, if it's a great game we'll say so and if it's poor, we'll tell you the truth.

FAIR We're not biased. A good game is a good game, regardless of format or who has made it.

THOROUGH We play games longer and harder than anyone else.

KNOWLEDGE Our writers are all experts, have years of experience and know what makes a cracking game.

Any game that earns Computer and Video Games' Five-Star Award is truly exceptional. It'll do more than just look good and play well, it will rank with the most enjoyable and rewarding games in existence on that format.

72 STAR WARS STARFIGHTER



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78 BLACK & WHITE

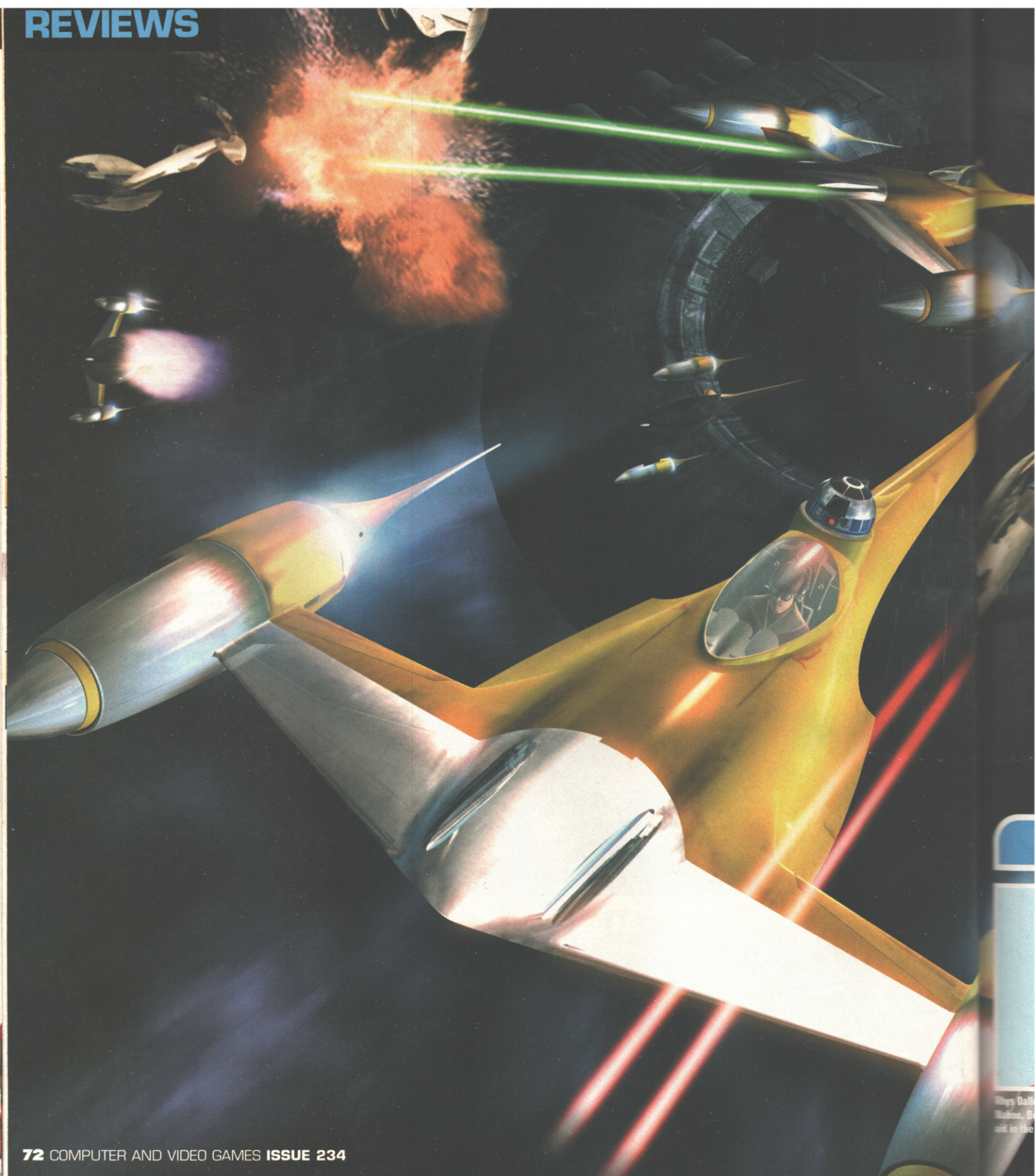


94 CONKER'S BAD FUR DAY



98 DAYTONA USA 2001





WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: JOHNNY MINKLEY

PS2

COST: £44.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2

From the excellence of *Rogue Squadron* and *Episode 1: Racer*, to the criminally atrocious *Jedi Power Battles* and *The Phantom Menace*, Star Wars games are much like *The Force* – an eternal struggle between good and evil where one can't exist without the other. So, like your first slobbery kiss behind the decks at the school disco, slipping PS2's first Wars title into the disk drive is a nerve-wracking moment. But fear not, as, (drum roll, please) it's actually rather good. Phew! You can breathe now, kids.

STAR WARS STARFIGHTER

Another PlayStation Star Wars disaster, or Episode PS2: A Naboo hope?

THREE'S COMPANY

The game runs parallel to events in *The Phantom Menace*, centring around the Trade Federation's attempted invasion of Naboo. There are three different pilots whom you assume control of during the game, and each has their own reasons for joining in the struggle against the forces of oppression.



Rhys Dallows is a member of the Bravo Flight squadron and a native Naboo. Beginning as a rookie, Rhys must learn fast if he is to both aid in the defence of his homeworld, and earn the respect of others



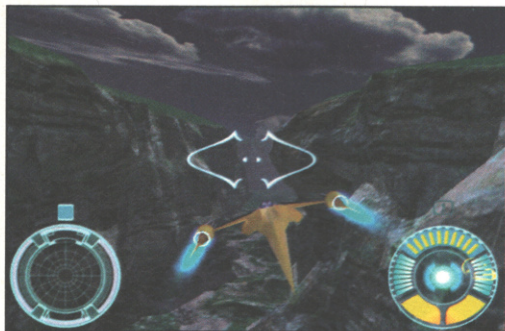
Born on Alderaan, Vana Sage left her home to become a mercenary. At the start of the game she still works for the Trade Federation, but as events transpire her loyalty quickly wavers



This ugly swine is Nym, an alien from the Outer Rim. He is hostile towards Vana Sage as she took him prisoner some years before while under the employment of the Trade Federation

AIN'T THAT PURDY?

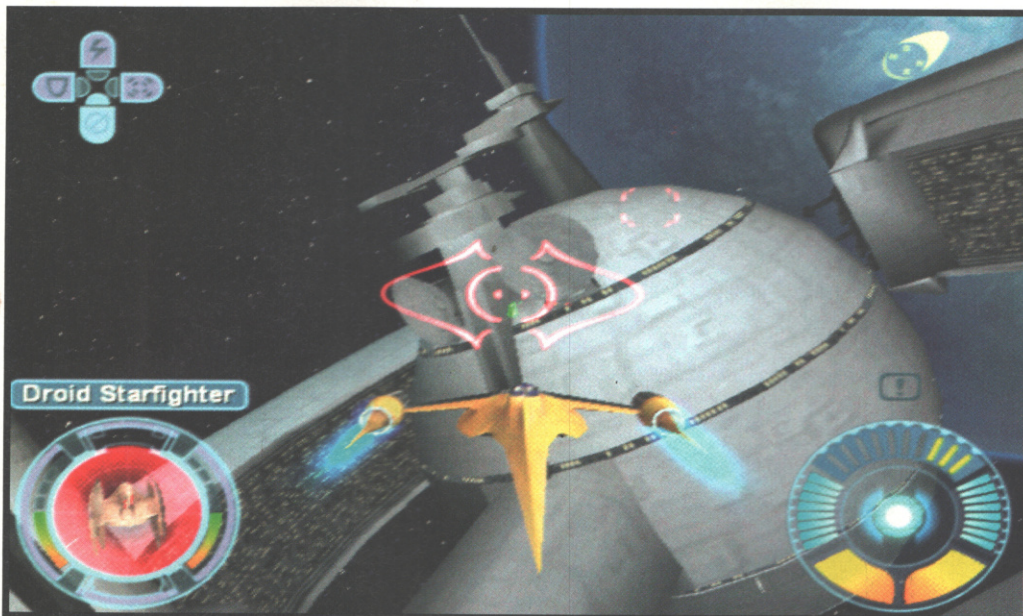
Despite the occasionally dodgy frame rate, this is an extremely pretty game and George Lucas' universe has been recreated in stunningly vibrant detail. Here's a sample to get the blood rushing.



A daring midnight sortie through Naboo's beautiful, hilly countryside



Here you must protect ships as they traverse the stunning oceans of Naboo



Space-based levels are extremely impressive due to the sheer number of craft that can be involved in battles. Look at the size of the Federation Control Ship

MULTIPLAYER

There are a couple of two-player levels tucked away in the game, that require unlocking. While not exactly stunning, smacking ever so slightly of an afterthought, they do provide occasional thrills if you get a Star Wars-obsessed mate over.



Initially this is a straight race between you and your opponent, culminating in a one-on-one dogfight for supremacy

STARRY STORY

The story of how these three apparently incompatible heroes bond together is told through frequent cutscenes which play out during missions. The CGI is impressive, though lacking a bit in character.



"I've shaken hands with a one-eyed vicar before, but never anyone as funny-looking as you." Watto sure ain't no Mona Lisa

INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE

YOU MUST UNLEARN WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

Starfighter makes full use of PS2's twin analogue sticks, offering a new and remarkably intuitive method of controlling your Star Wars fighters.



The left stick controls the pitch and yaw of your craft, and though it's possible to fly only using this, use twin controls for complete mastery



The right stick allows you to roll your ship to either side, which can be incredibly useful when flying through particularly tight areas



It's easy to lose your bearings and end up careering towards the ground. A quick tap of the right stick will level your craft up in an instant



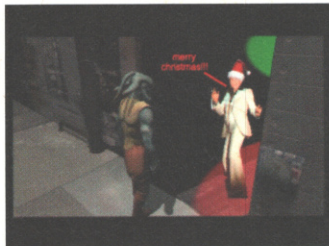
A useful trick to learn is the slide turn. This is enacted by quickly braking after you've boosted, allowing you to quickly perform a sharp corner

INVISIBLE FORCE

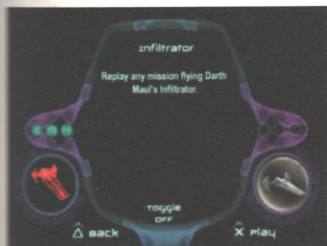
As has become the norm with LucasArts titles, *Starfighter* is jammed to the hilt with an Imperial army's worth of hidden extras. These are unlocked by completing certain additional tasks in the main game. For doing these you are rewarded with medals, which – when you have enough – give access to the secrets.



Jar mode reverses your ship's controls



There's a secret Christmas-themed ending



Darth Maul's Infiltrator ship is unlockable



There's some wicked pre-production artwork



Now, this rocks. It's an experimental version of the N-1 Starfighter, and it's all yours with a bit of effort. With some tasty secondary weapons and a nice blue paint job, you'll enjoy wizzing this baby around

STARS AND SNIPES

One of the coolest features in the game is the ability to zoom your targeting sights in on an enemy using the R1 button. This adds an element of stealth to certain levels, as you are able to skulk around at long range and attack before your foe has a chance to return fire...



You've targeted a foe but they're too far away to fire at accurately



Hold R1 and you zoom in, allowing you to pick them off with ease



Bok! The enemy's toast before they've even realised you're there

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Battle For Naboo (N64), Starlancer (DC)

CLASS OF 2001

As a first effort on PS2, LucasArts has, by and large, come up trumps. *Starfighter* is a competent, classy fighter that in spite of its flaws provides tense, exciting gameplay. It's not a million miles from *Rogue Squadron* and *Battle For Naboo*, as you pilot various craft, completing a series of missions connected by a strong plot.

STAY ON TARGET

Where *Starfighter* excels is in its beautifully designed control system. The twin stick method works extremely well and further commands have been intelligently distributed around the pad, allowing for maximum ease of use. Getting

used to the HUD takes a little longer to get to grips with, but once learned, the sense of being in the cockpit of a space fighter is very convincing. Special mention must also go to the zoom feature, which adds big, fat Jabba-sized dollops of fun to the proceedings.

YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED

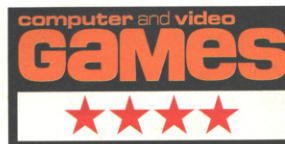
Graphically, *Starfighter* is solid and can shift at a frightening rate of knots. The only let down is the occasional, but disappointing, drop in frame rate when several objects are on screen at once. Mostly this isn't much of a drawback, but during particularly hectic battles, things can get a bit jerky. The music, as it really should be, is

awesome and excerpts from John Williams' tremendous score have been put to atmospheric use. Sound effects are satisfyingly authentic, adding to the overall cinematic feel, and only the cheesy voice-acting is a let down.

FLYING WITHOUT (X-)WINGS

Though the main game's 14 missions won't take an eternity to finish on easier settings, there's a wealth of excellent features to be unlocked by completing various additional tasks, making *Starfighter* an attractive package. Despite the repetitive nature of the missions, the sheer scale of some of the battles can be breathtaking, and spotting the approach of a

squadron of enemy fighters is enough to soil more than a few pairs of pants. It would have been nice to have X-Wings and TIE-Fighters rather than Episode 1's less inspired offerings, but it is still a joy to see a good Star Wars game. Everyone at CVG (apart from weirdo Trekkie-boy Skittrell) loves Star Wars and this certainly made us all a very happy bunch.





COST: £39.99
OUT: SEPT

MULTIPLAYER: NO

It's an RPG. It's two-dimensional. It's utterly compulsive

PAPER MARIO

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: DEAN SCOTT

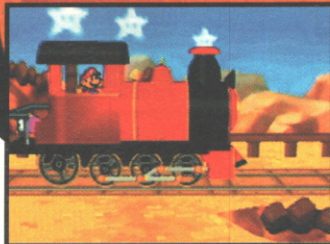
Any new Mario game is a cause for celebration. Well, apart from *Mario Party*, that is. Once again Bowser has snatched Princess Peach, and once again the powers that be have called on a plumber rather than an armed response unit. This time it's a little different though. This time Mario's 2mm thick and starring in a role-playing game.

PLAYTIME

Paper Mario plays like a dream. Forget pages of stats and spells, they don't apply in this RPG. Special abilities come in the form of badges Mario finds on his way. Wear them, and they use 'flower points' up. Take hits in a fight and your 'heart points' drop. The exploring is a laugh, and the dungeoneering is closer to the arcadey fun of *Zelda* than the old-school stat-fest of *Final Fantasy*.



One bizarre subgame involves hatching a litter of coloured pigs out of some eggs. Huh?



How does Mario get across the desert? He commandeers a train. How cool is that?



You don't slide around on slopes for coins in any other RPG we've seen. *Paper Mario* carries it off



The badge system. Clip on a new badge, feel the benefits. No spells to learn, no numbers to juggle

GENRE CONFUSION

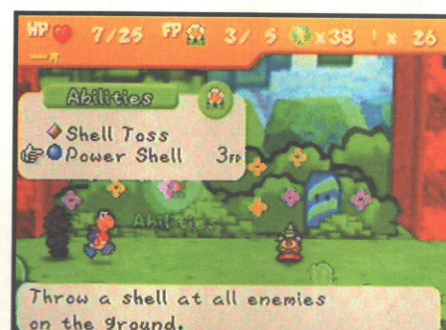
Paper Mario wears its history pretty proudly. All the time you're running Mazza around, you're basically on a fixed left to right path. You can run into and out of the screen and bust blocks with your head. But you soon realise this is no ordinary Mario game the first time you try jumping on someone's head to kill them.



Fighting is no longer about leaping on enemies' noggins. It's turn based stuff, apart from the first round where reactions count



Attack moves are much more interactive than in your average RPG, testing your arcade timing as well as your strategy

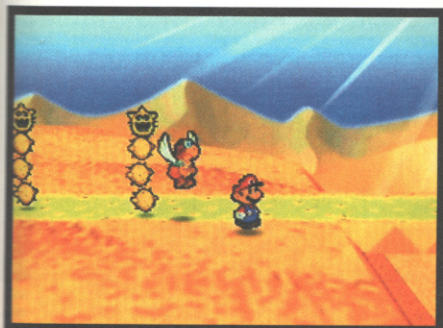


You pick up friends who'll join your party along the way, so use them to fight in their own unique ways

"You even get to team up with some old enemies such as a Koopa Troopa and a Goombario"

PAPER-THIN PLOT

The 'Paper' in the title refers not only to the game's distinctive visual style, but also to the thinness of the plot. The Princess has gone, and Bowser is wielding the all-powerful Star Rod. You've got to rescue 7 wise old stars to get the Star Rod back. It may not have the emotional impact of *Final Fantasy*, but *PM* is a perfect introduction to the genre.



You'll want to play all the way through *Paper Mario*, because every character you meet is a recognisable face



It's the Mario Universe you know and love, but you experience it from a completely different perspective



The story won't exactly bring tears to your eyes, but you plod through at a nice pace and it's great fun

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Zelda: Ocarina of Time (NG64)
Final Fantasy 9 (Psonel),

GAMEPLAY IN, FMV OUT

Hardcore RPGers will scoff at the looks and shallow story, but the gameplay is more involving than any of the FMV discs they champion so blindly. Who said RPGs couldn't be fun? Certainly not Nintendo. And in working a *Vagrant Story* level of interaction into the fight sequences, the action is non-stop. The platform elements will lure in the jump 'n' run crowd, but when the stats heat up they'll still be sat in the chair.

SAY HELLO TO OLD FRIENDS

Paper Mario sneaks its RPG elements in at a rate a seven year old wouldn't struggle with, and before you realise it you're the master of a complex game system. Every familiar face you meet warms your heart, and this time you even get to team up with some old enemies such as a Koopa Troopa and a Goombario. Despite the game's primary school look it's got the depth to keep you playing for

hours. Like any Mario game there are tons of secrets to uncover, but don't go expecting much dialogue and plotting. Nobody gets killed in this game, and even the baddest of the bad guys are usually made to admit the errors of their ways rather than being put to the sword.

MARIO RULES AGAIN

There isn't a better old-school RPG for the system, not that there's much competition. *Paper Mario* is an oasis of gameplay and charm in

the NG64's role playing desert, and you'd be a fool to pass it up. While it's a very different experience to the classic 'Station RPGs', it's the perfect NG64 adventure.



PC
CD
ROM

COST: £34.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-8

The game that says more about you than you may care to know

BLACK & WHITE

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LES ELLIS

The brains behind *Black & White* defined the god sim genre years ago with *Populous*. A decade of copycats later and they've returned with this piece of divine intervention. You are a god. You rule your people, proving your awesome powers with miracles and using a giant creature to carry out your will. Think Tamagotchi meets *Zelda* and you're starting to scratch the surface of the biggest and most ambitious PC game yet.

DON'T HAVE A COW MAN

It's a zoo out there. If your people don't believe in God, in other words you, what better way to show them the path to righteousness or aiding their descent into hell than by sending your towering creature to impress or terrify them into worshipping you? Which path will you choose?



You get a choice of three creatures to start off with – the cow, the gorilla and the tiger. You get others to choose from as you go



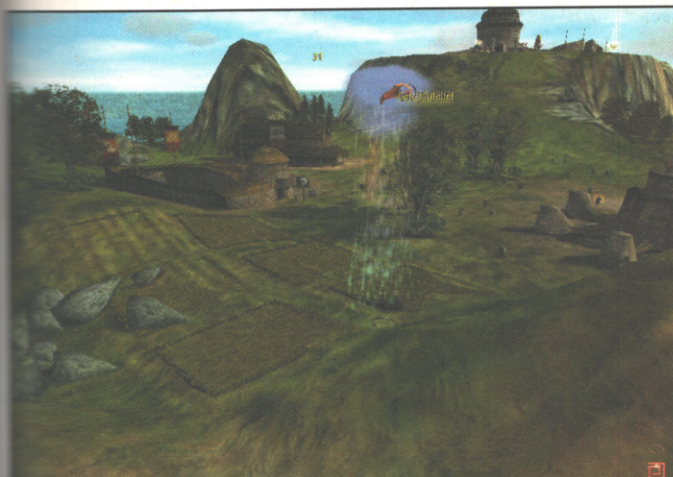
He's your new friend, play with him and look after him well. Remember he needs plenty of food and somewhere to hang out



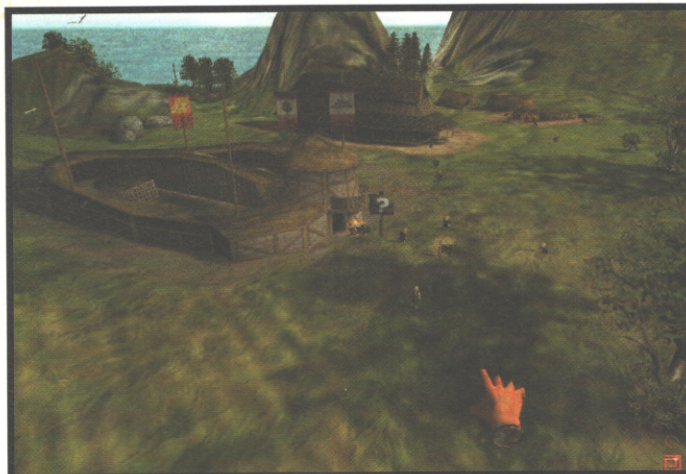
Discipline is important – when he does something right, make a fuss of him. If he steps out of line, slap him across the face

BUILDINGBLOCKS

Probably the least fun part of the game is the building aspect, but only because it means you're not unleashing your terrifying powers all over the world or playing with your creature. It's unavoidable, though, as your people need a nice little village to keep them all happy.



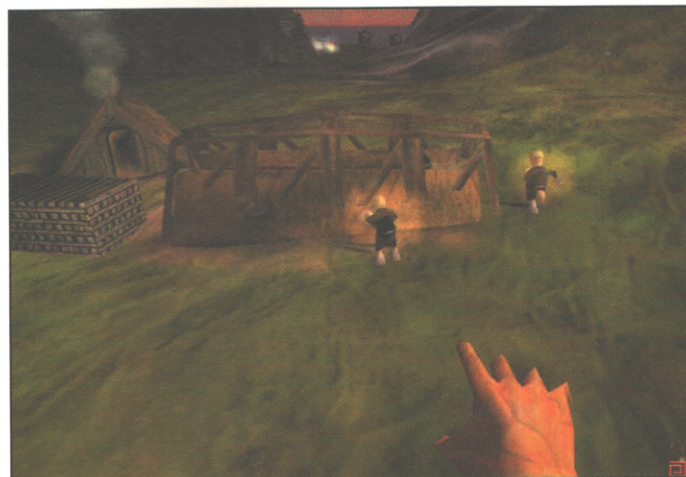
Keep an eye on the farms and cast water miracles if you need to make the food grow faster



Create forests or cast wood miracles to keep wood stocks high as this is your main building resource



Before you get anything built you need scaffolding. Place this anywhere and your men can get to work



You need to build homes for the villagers as well as civic buildings and wonders to keep them happy

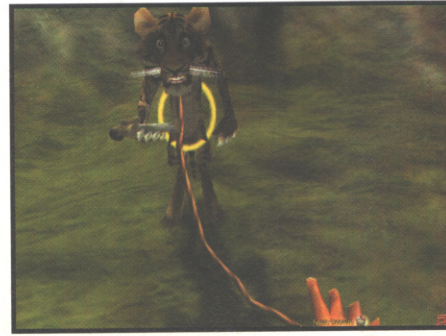
Your creature needs constant attention to stop him misbehaving – though this is where many of the game's funniest moments kick in as you really have no idea what the AI will make the big fella do. Keep him on a tight reign and he will be more useful to you as you try and carry out missions. But let him run riot and grow up a bit bad, and you can reap the benefits when some neutral villages need some strong arm tactics to convince them to worship you.



Teach him well. To rescue some sailors we sent the cow. He got half way back to shore and threw them the rest of the way. They died



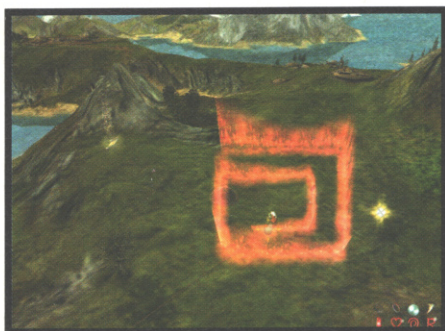
Your creature will eat a lot and the, er, waste matter has to go somewhere, accompanied by some pretty gross sound effects



If the creature is hungry and just happens to pick up a human being... let's just say you better get there quick

SPELLBOUND

As miraculous as it seems, you can access everything in *Black & White* with your mouse – moving the screen around is a doddle and you just point and click to get your creature to go somewhere. Easy. Best of all is the spell system. You draw out a simple shape you are given when you learn the spell with your mouse and Hey Presto! The magic is done.



Just hold the right button down and draw the symbol of the spell you want to cast to prepare it. Simple and original



When you battle other gods you gain new powers. Build shields around your most valued structures to protect them



To keep your miracle power up you need people to worship at your temple. That means the more villages you control, the better

GOOD GOD BAD GOD

Your villagers have finally stopped whinging about wanting more homes and civic buildings. Everything is running like clockwork. Perfect time to look abroad to satisfy your expansionist desires. How about that peaceful town in the next valley? Could be time to pay them a visit.



You can woo new villages by bestowing your favours on them. Try raining on their crops for one



Or you could send in your titanic creature. Watch them bow before your Johnny Morris-like powers



Your pet enters the village, and with luck he will answer the call of nature in their food supply



Your other option is to start smashing their lovely home to pieces with rocks until they submit

“One minute your creature is a cute fluffy little kitten, and the next a 40-foot tall death machine”

But it's not all fun and games with your new-found friend. He'll need to learn to fight hand to hand – and will be presented with plenty of opportunities to do so. You can also take him online to prove his might against other gods' creatures. The fighting is simplistic at first, with complicated hit and dodge combos ready for anyone who wants to delve deeper and learn the intricacies. Good results come through patient and extensive training.



With your hand icon you can do just about anything. But when smacking him about or stroking him careful of his ticklish areas



This could be taking mad cow disease too far – teach your cloven hooved pal to fight like a nutter on your behalf



This cow likes his football so much that when a trainer pops in to stop him, he picks him up and chucks him over the wall

BUILDING FEATURE

You can be good or bad. It's up to you. But everything you do reflects in the game world, including the way your creature develops. One minute he's a cute fluffy little kitten, the next he's 40 feet tall death machine.



This benign looking fella is the result of many good deeds and a land ruled by justice and tenderness, which is the way we played it of course



The evil ape complete with devil horns. You'd have to be a real nasty piece of work to spawn such a monstrous earthly representative



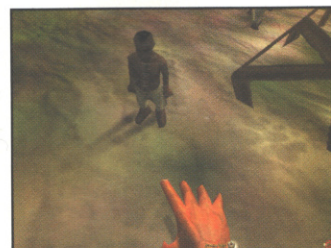
Not available at the start of the game, but a giant Godzilla crocodile walking through a village should be enough to scare most people into loving you

ZOOM ZOOM

You have complete control over the camera. Keep tabs with the satellite view, or zoom in so you can see the whites of your villagers' fears.



Alright, so you may not be able to do much from up here, but hold your mouse buttons together and push up...



...and you can zoom all the way in to get as up close and personal as you want with your villagers in an instant - bleedin' impressive



Up close is cute - but useless once all hell starts to break loose - thank God there's plenty of detail when you get to a playable view

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Civilisation (PC),
Zelda (N64),
Digimon (PS),
Pokémon (GBC)

THERE'S ONLY ONE GOD - YOU

You can probably tell by now that *BSW* isn't any ordinary game. On top of the god aspects, you have a playmate in your creature and some puzzles and realtime strategy to get to grips with as well. Hell, there's even a bit of a beat 'em up in here. There is an overall goal, but how you get there and how long it takes is down to you.

CREATURE FEATURE

Your villagers give you tasks to prove your godly powers to them. Some you can pull off yourself, for

others you'll need to use your creature. This is where the game's AI starts showing off. The way your beast behaves depends entirely on its upbringing. You have to teach and nurture him Tamagotchi-style. He'll want feeding, watering and entertaining. Let him run wild and he'll eat villagers and throw faeces all over the place instead of helping you take over the world.

BIGGER THAN GOD

With a game of this magnitude it's tricky to get in everything that goes on. You carry out tasks for your

villagers and take over other tribes by impressing them with your powers and your creature. You combat other gods to steal their lands and battle your creature against theirs. You build and design villages, manage resources and develop spells - we would be here all week trying to explain everything.

Let's just say this is a landmark game that will be remembered for kicking off a new generation of ultra-sophisticated PC titles. Complex, but hellishly addictive and very rewarding. It looks stunning, has

unbelievable depth, spookily good AI and has to be one the most addictive and most ambitious games we've come across. This heavenly mix of *Zelda*, *Tamagotchi* and *Populous* moves god sims into the next generation.





COST: £29.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2



Seeing stars ain't good – means you've been bashed



The B-ball is a wicked weapon at close range



Split-screen relies on you knowing the courses

TOY STORY RACER

Insert stock 'to infinity' Toy Story quote

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LEE SKITTRELL



Regular races are good and battle modes are cool. Lay on the comedy hurt!

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Toy Story Racer looks fantastic. Each racer is lovingly crafted and bursting with personality. The course graphics are stunning and you'll marvel at the reflections and the super-smooth frame rate.

But it's in the actual gameplay where *Toy Story Racer* attempts to offer a little more than your average kart racer. The emphasis is on individual challenges and variety, rather than simple races around different tracks to win a championship.

ARMY MEN RULE!

In single player your initial selection of racers comprises of Woody, Buzz, Bo Peep and RC. Each character has his or her own selection of race challenges ranging from straight races to more complex tasks such as winning a race while avoiding getting smacked by rivals. For each challenge won you'll receive an Army Man toy that will let you access new courses.

KARTING CLICHES

While this innovative racing structure is more fun than simply racing through a bunch of random cup challenges,



RC brings up the rear through the air vents

the game still features every kart racer cliché there ever was. Power-ups appear wrapped in pretty boxes on each track, and they range from rear-firing sheep to vicious rockets. As you'd expect, speed boosts are dotted around the tracks and there are shortcuts everywhere.

WORTH PLAYING?

Toy Story Racer is undoubtedly a quality package and you get loads of game for your cash. It's mostly great fun too, apart from its Achilles Heel: the all important two-player game. As with the solo game there are loads of different race challenges on offer, but the problem is the courses are so damn complicated that experience counts for more than skill.

Add in some shocking pop-up in two-player race-offs and the brilliant *Toy Story* atmosphere starts to slack off a little. This is a good little racer but there isn't quite enough new in here to pump it up to the four star proportions.



It's snow joke – wintry racing treats galore

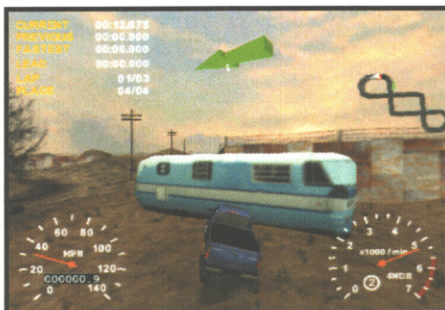
computer and video
Games



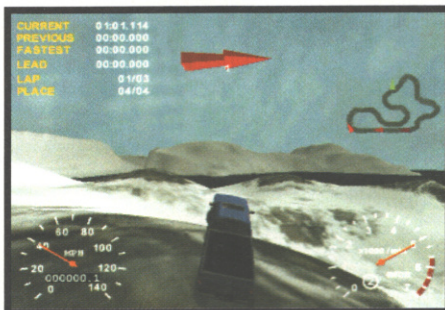
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...
Mario Kart 64 (N64), *Toy Story 2* (PS/DC)



From winding trails traversing snow-capped mountains to dirt tracks on tropical islands, you get more or less every kind of tricky terrain to pit your wits against here



'Anyone seen Bubba? Six foot high an' chews tobacch like gum'



Forget the race, how about a bit of off road action? You can go pretty much anywhere you want, not that it will get you anywhere



Watch out for nasty track-side obstacles

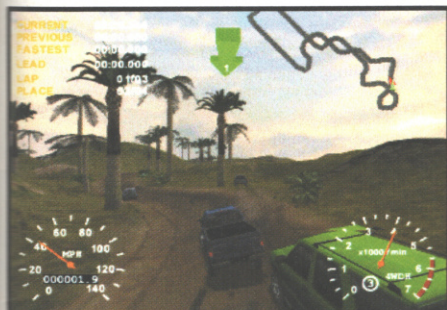


Turn off and pay uncle Jim-Bob a visit

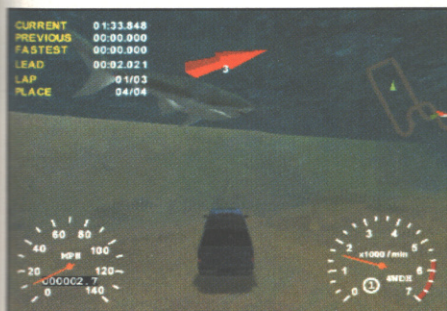
4X4 EVOLUTION

Wheel spinnin' and grit grindin' good times

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: MAURA SUTTON



They may not be the most glamorous of motors but they sure can be a whole lot of fun to drive. The pick-up is a particular favourite



You can even check out the marine life on some of the coastal courses. We recommend you don't try this one at home

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

As exciting as Formula 1 motor racing may be, how many of us are actually going to get the chance to race those streamlined million dollar machines in real life? OK, Jensen, except for you.

4x4 Evolution gives you the chance to get to get your hands dirty a little closer to home. Here you get a choice of over 70 off-road vehicles, many of which you'll recognise from the streets of your own towns and cities, including the humble pick-up truck and the school-run People Carrier.

DRIVING MISS DUSTY

In Quick Race and Versus modes you get to choose from 15 tracks including some spectacularly detailed locations ranging from

alpine mountains where you have to leap across snow-bound battleships, to a steamy Louisiana Bayou where paddle steamers chug about in the background.

In Career mode you have to finish in the top three to progress, earning money as you go. You can spend your winnings on extensive upgrades, or even on a new vehicle if you're feeling greedy.

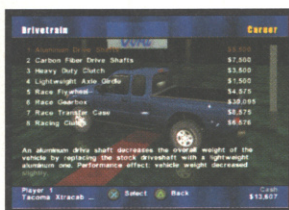
FIVE BY FIVE

Let's face it, driving a huge hulking vehicle at top speed through mud, dust, dirt and washing lines is a complete blast. One of the best things about 4x4 Evolution is the fact you can go anywhere you want on the huge levels.

So if you find yourself lagging behind in the race and feel like doing some sightseeing rather than competing, then off you go. You can plough through swollen rivers, rampage across corn fields and generally give the hillbilly rednecks the fright of their lives as they fester in their trailer parks. It's cool.

WORTH PLAYING?

It makes a pleasant change to be racing big chunky lumps of bouncing metal around dirt tracks instead of twitchy F1 cars that go spinning at



Here's your shiny new ride. So stop drooling and hand over the cash, OK?

REVIEWS

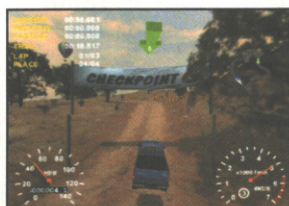


COST: £39.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2



The action gets manic at times. This freight train is a nightmare when you first see it



In Arcade mode it's about hitting those all important checkpoints. Plenty o' fun



The upgrade screens are detailed enough to make you a fully qualified motor mechanic

the slightest excuse. But this isn't a racer for those who like their dream machines sleek and super speedy as the realistically heavy handling of these off-roaders takes some getting used to and can be feel sluggish at times.

4x4 Evolution is well presented and packed with intricate details that petrol heads will love. It's not going to change your world, but it might make it a more fun place for a week or two.



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...
Destruction Derby Raw (PSone),
Smuggler's Run (PS2)



COST: £29.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2

Referee! Ref-er-ee! You've just lost me my job. Thanks very much

LMA MANAGER 2001

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: RON FATKINSON

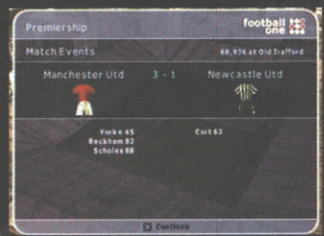
The atmosphere in the dressing room is awful. The lads' heads are down and they're bickering with each other. 2-0 down at half-time in the cup final. They're getting killed out there. It's men against boys. They're just going to embarrass themselves even more in the second half. What are you going to say to lift them? How are you going to shuffle the pack? *LMA Manager 2001* is here to see if you've got the bottle to do one of the most thankless jobs in the world.

SMELL THE SCIENCE

The acid test of any footy manager sim is to send out the crappiest team you can to see if it makes a difference. We put Man Utd's goalkeepers up front, Beckham and Giggs as centre backs and Sheringham in goal. We drew 3-3 at West Ham, and lost 1-0 at home to Bradford. Here's a more scientific study:



Here they are, the mighty red army. We picked our strongest side for a clash with the Magpies



Unsurprisingly, United crushed the feeble Geordies 3-1. Pretty much as you'd expect it'd happen



Second time round we take squad rotation to insane levels with a side featuring Barthez up front



Nil-nil. Proves putting a scrambled team out does make a difference. Good work Codemasters

COOL FEATURES



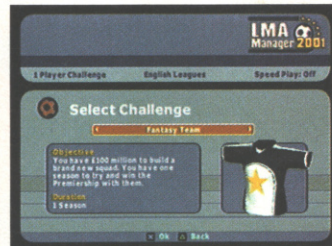
While the match is in progress, you can shout a limited selection of audible tactics at the players



If you eat haggis and wear a sporran, you'll be glad to see Scottish teams playable this time out



We like the pre-set tactics. Here's Kilmarnock using the French 1998 World Cup team's setup



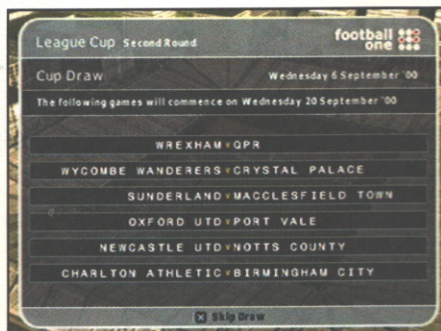
Fourteen challenge modes include this option to build a fantasy team and win the Premiership

GET FANATICAL

Any kind of footy game will look in a fan if it shows those crucial signs of realism. *LMA* rarely does anything silly - you don't get stupid stuff like Martin Keown getting a hat-trick or Andy Cole actually scoring most of his chances. Just seeing all the real-life players getting booked and scoring is an immediate recipe for long nights.



Leeds roast Everton 2-0 at home. Largely to be expected



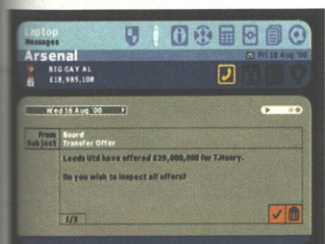
Ex-FA groan-mouth Graham Kelly does the cup draw voiceovers



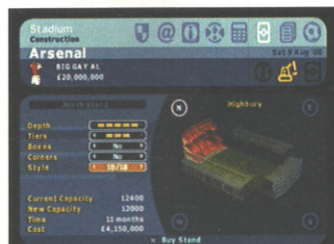
The highlights look rough as hell, but with Alan Hansen commentary

A DAY IN THE LIFE

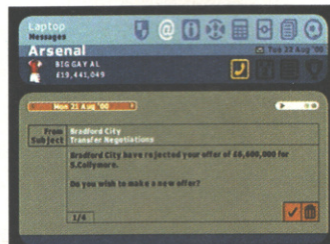
Why is Arsene Wenger whining all the time? It's a piece of cake this management lark. We took the hot seat at Arsenal, and were soon rolling over the top teams in the league. Once you've sussed how the menus work, you're well on the way to your first Manager of the Month award.



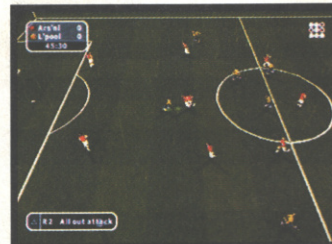
The other bosses try to take me for a mug 'coz I'm new. Sell Henry? You're 'aving a larf encha?



Highbury is a stinky little grief hole. Let's build a new North Stand and tart it up a bit



Bergkamp's well past it. Let's sign a reliable and hardworking striker like Stan Collymore



Saturday comes, and the boys are well up for it. Get stuck in lads! Break his legs!

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Championship Manager 3 (PC), Play As Manager (PC, coming soon)

BEST CONSOLE MANAGER

Let's get the easy bit out of the way. *LMA 2001* is the best management game you're going to play if you avoid PCs like Dwight Yorke avoids an early night before a match. It's a breeze to navigate and the result has a ring of authenticity about it. Looks-wise it's the lair Dowie of the gaming world, but the text is what brings the happiness.

FOR FANS ONLY

Of course, if you hate footy this is going to be the worst game you ever play. Long load times, extremely long save times, and page after page of uninspiring letters and numbers. Management games care little for people like you: go away and play Barbie, or whatever you do with your sordid little soccer-free existence.

CHAMP MAN STILL THE DADDY

The challenge mode is new and all the stats have been updated since the last one too. We take exception to the long periods spent looking at loading screens and think it should look loads better. But the real killer is that *Championship Manager* on PC still makes this look like My First Manager Game with its awesome tactical and statistical depth. But

the sheepskin coat-wearing PS player can safely assume this is as good as it gets on P5one.



COST: **£39.99**OUT: **NOW**MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

SKY ODYSSEY

A flight sim with no button marked 'Fire'? Have they gone plane mad or is this peaceful piloter just what the flying doctor ordered?

A flying game without guns. Isn't that a bit like a Formula One race without any crashes – a bit tedious? You might think so, but even the most bullet-obsessed air combat maniacs might find a soft spot in their PS2 DVD drive for this quietly addictive action-sim. Veteran players may immediately compare *Sky Odyssey* to *Pilot Wings*, that other pacifist propeller-fest. And rightly so, since the periods of mellow coasting followed by nail-biting tension as you struggle to avoid those mountains is very similar to that N64 classic. So here we go, it's not the ride of a lifetime but it's a surprisingly good one nevertheless.

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: STEVED

BIRD'S EYEWVIEW

You're an explorer. But instead of tip-toeing around dark caves, you zip across uncharted islands in an old plane seeking relics and other gubbins. Missions range from the bizarre to the ridiculous and sitting in a noisy WW2 fighter at 1000ft may not sound like the best place to spot ancient relics from, but don't let that put you off.



Missions objectives may seem odd but they never fail to offer up a fresh challenge and a new aeronautical headache to soothe



One mission sees your plane with a fuel leak and not enough gas to make it to the next airstrip. You have to refuel from this train



Whatever the mission, you don't half feel satisfied as you bank around for the landing strip approach, such as on this carrier



IF YOU
LIKE TO
TRY
THESE

Pilot Wings
(N64)
Star Wars
Starfighter
(PS2)

LEARNING TO FLY

SO seems damn tough at the beginning while you master the controls and it'll take you several tries to beat the first level. Cranking it down to Easy mode won't help as the simplified controls are actually worse. But stick with it and suddenly everything will click and you'll start finding these old rustbuckets a dream to pilot.



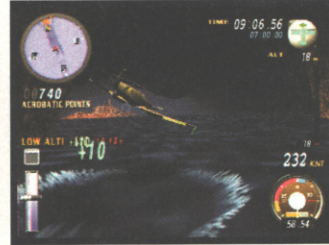
Easy control mode is harder than Normal. Erm?



It has the feel of flying but this is no sim. Phew



Get a feel for it and the controls become sweet



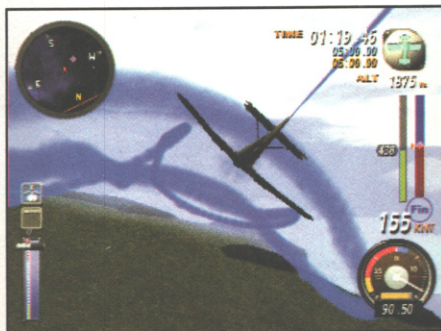
Clipping the water with a wing won't take you out

AIRPLANE GAMES

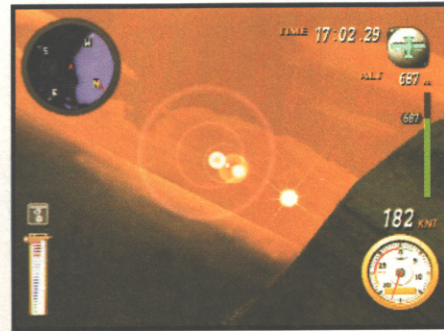
Should exploring uncharted territories from the air, uncovering crumbling ruins and other such adventurous stuff begin to tire, you can always plump for one of the other modes of play. Though not as hot as the main game, these can offer a welcome distraction. Shame there's no multiplayer.



Fly through consecutively numbered rings in Target mode



Paint ickle patterns in the sky with smoke in Sky Canvas mode. Aww



Free Flight mode lets you fly freely wherever you want. Strange that

FLY BY NIGHT

Visually, SO may take some flak. Everything looks hi-res but the textures are a little bland and mountains and other objects have a habit of popping up out of nowhere. But the overall effect is pretty good and some of the weather effects – such as rain pounding off the fuselage or sneaking lightning that cuts through the storm clouds – are great.



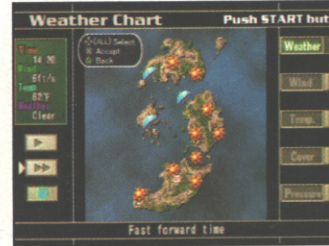
Textures may be hi-res but up close disappoint



Check out the mint lightning effect. It can't hit you



Fly through flooded caverns avoiding stalactites



Before hitting the skies, check the weather report

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Pilot Wings (N64), Star Wars Starfighter (PS2)

FROM OUT OF NOWHERE
SO has swooped in with a minimum of hype. It's got nothing to satisfy trigger-happy blood-lusters, but is surprisingly addictive and gleams on the PS2 shelf among the myriad of sequels, re-hashes and let-downs. Though no two-player is poor, there are enough modes and levels to keep you plugging away.
TOO HOT TO HANDLE
The planes' handling feels realistic and you'll find straining to wrench

the bunch of nuts and bolts round to avoid a canyon wall or tweaking the rudders to line up with the runway is satisfying. But it's tough.

Missions can last anything up to ten minutes, and one false move can see you ploughing into the ground at 300 mph, forcing a level restart. When you first get the game home, you may even find yourself still on the opening level ten goes later, seriously considering throwing your joypad at the TV and

taking the game back to the shop complaining that it's too hard. But stick with it and you'll be rewarded. By the time you crack that first level, you'll have learned enough to mean the next few levels will seem a breeze in comparison.

WORTH PLAYING?

As you start completing the wildly different and challenging missions, you'll slowly but surely begin to feel hooked. "But I haven't raked any trucks with cannon fire or splashed

any MiGs with Sidewinders," you'll say, struggling to understand how this pleasant looking flying oddity has become your favourite PS2 game of the moment.





COST: £44.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4

It's time to throw your PC out the window and let the PS2 lead you into a console-only version of the world's favourite deathmatch shooter. *Quake 3* has rocket-jumped onto PS2 and the good news is it beats the living daylights out of other FPS games on the system. If you're looking for the fastest, bloodiest and most thrilling multiplayer game around then *Quake 3* is for you. Heck, even if you've got less mates than Nasty Nick there are still loads of new maps and modes to keep you happy playing on your own. This isn't just *Quake 3*, it's *Quake 3: Revolution*.

Bring out the big guns, *Quake 3* is here

QUAKE 3: REVOLUTION

WORDS: JOFF BROWN SCREENSHOTS: BULLFROG

WHAT A LOOKER

Even hardened PS2 fans might have been a bit worried about the quality of *Quake 3*'s graphics after seeing PS2 *Unreal Tournament* jerk around in multiplayer. Put your minds at ease because *Quake 3* runs at a smooth 50 frames per second, every second. And the graphics? Take a look for yourselves...



No matter how much action there is on the screen, *Quake 3: Revolution* won't slow down. Even multiplayer deathmatches run smoothly



The resolutions don't match those of a high-end PC but remember, a PS2 costs 300 quid. So sit back and gasp at the brilliant colours and models



Don't expect to find traditional PS2 problems like jagged edges round polygons or boring repeated textures either. Everything's been coded just right



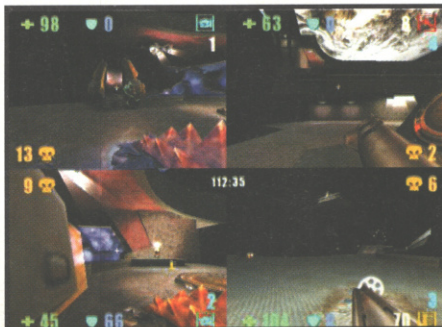
It's the little touches that make the arenas so special. There are loads of lightning effects, flickering teleporters and pulsing tentacles

MULTIPLAYER MADNESS

What would *Quake 3* be without multiplayer? Not half as interesting, that's what. Rest assured that the PS2's multiplayer version contains all the thrills you'd expect. Killing your friends has never been this much fun.



The only way to play deathmatch is to divide the screen up. You can play with up to three mates each with a quarter screen



Simple icons replace the normal weapon and health pick-ups. This not only keeps things running smoothly, it aids visibility too



The only problem is that it's really hard to make out other players or bots unless they are right up close

CELEBRITY SKINS

All your favourite *Quake 3* character models are included in the game, including the cigar-chomping Sarge and various ugly-looking alien assassins. There's even one or two new faces in the crowd, including an all-new end of game boss character.



Characters' heads turn searching for targets and the animation as they leap and dash about is sweet



Complete the game and get a new level where you battle Horny and the Mistress from *Dungeon Keeper*

INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE

BE A SPEED DEMON

The very first time you enter a deathmatch you're likely to die within seconds. Unless you read this first.



The first rule of *Quake 3* is: keep moving. Bots and players will find it so much harder to hit you. The second you stop is the second you die



Keep your back to the wall. It's the only time you can be sure you won't get attacked from behind. Get used to strafing sideways rather than turning



Know your weaponry. A shotgun's useless at long range attacks and a rocket in a closed space will kill you. Got to have the right tool for the job



Don't waste ammo. Seasoned players know every round is valuable and mindless shooting gives away your position. Above all, keep your cool

MODERED

So we all know that multiplayer is what *Quake* was designed for. But we also know that without internet access, console games need a good single player mode. The cunning developers of *Quake 3: Revolution* know this full well and they have added a handful of new modes to the mix to keep you coming back even when your buddies aren't around.



Your character gets faster, stronger and harder to kill every time you complete a level



Some levels see you holding a flag for a set period and others give you a few lives to bag a load of kills



You'll also play more traditional modes like Capture the Flag and the classic deathmatch



Some might say the new modes of play are similar to *Unreal Tournie*, but who's complaining?

WHAT'S WRONG?

OK, so far so good, but we'd be lying if we said that *Revolution* didn't have a few flaws. At the end of the day, it's a conversion from a fairly old PC game so it was never going to be perfect. So here are the game's weaker points that you should bear in mind when deciding whether to buy.



There's no support for a USB mouse or keyboard so you have to play with a pad. Although play is still smooth, accuracy is a problem



You get a maximum of five other characters in each arena, so some of the bigger levels can look a bit empty at times



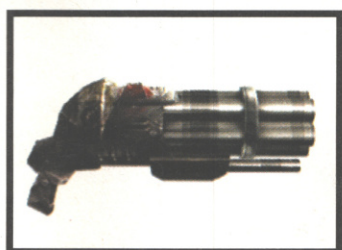
Unlike *Unreal*, you can't link two PS2s up to play with a whole screen each. Bogus, but not exactly the end of the world

SO WHAT'S NEW?

Times have changed since *Quake 3* first appeared, and the latest thrill is *Quake 3: Team Arena* on PC. The PS2 contains a few new *Team Arena* elements, so even those of you familiar with the game will find some all-new goodies in this version, like the three tasty new weapons.



The nail gun returns to hammer your opponents



The chaingun fires thousands of rounds a minute



The proximity mine gun will please evil pranksters



Six new *Team Arena* maps have been stuffed in

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

TimeSplitters (PS2),
Unreal Tournament (PC)

BRING IT ON

Quake 3: Revolution is a great, console-friendly conversion. There may be no internet aspect like online multiplayer or downloadable skins and maps, but it feels like 'proper' *Quake*. The extras in single player mode are mostly well thought out, though improving your character after every level sits uncomfortably with the concept of

deathmatches. How can they be battles of pure skill if everyone's character has different abilities? Working in some *Team Arena* maps and weapons is a great idea, it's just a shame that the whole expansion didn't fit. Ah well.

HARDCORE

Can we be brutally honest for a second? Multiplayer deathmatch on a console will never be quite as

good as it is on loads of top-spec PCs with amazing graphics cards, all linked up together. But for those of us who aren't millionaire playboys, *Quake 3: Revolution* is the next best thing. All the problems with the graphically great but far-too-hard Dreamcast version have been smoothed out, and even frag addicts will agree that the analogue control method works pretty damn

well. Add in all the extra maps and play modes, and you've got the best FPS the black box has to offer.



PS2

COST: £39.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: NO

WARRIORS OF MIGHT AND MAGIC

Duke Nukem in a loincloth. Sounds like fun?

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: MAURA SUTTON



You can switch to a first person view to aim spells and check out your adversaries

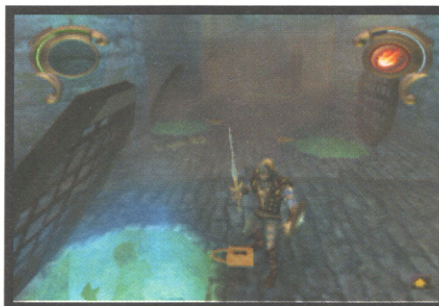
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The *Might and Magic* series is as old as time itself. When the cavemen were inventing the wheel they probably played a little *M&M* to chill them out during a chiselling break. Some of the games have been great, some of them have been pants. Such is life. Now there's a *Might and Magic* game finally coming out on the most advanced piece of gaming hardware on the planet. It might have been a disaster to mix dungeons and dragons type malarkey with PS2

technology, but the whole thing actually works pretty damn well, as it happens.

HIGHWAY TO HELL

Wrongly accused of being a necromancer, Alleron is cast into the Pit of the Accused by the Grand Inquisitor and made to wear a stinky black mask. Your job is to first help him escape from the bowels of the earth, then to help him remove the mask and become whole again. As you hack and slash your way through the legions of hell



Lost souls grab at your feet and beg you to free them. It's freaky!

you pick up new weapons as well as various pieces of armour and potions. You also fairly quickly start to learn elemental magic which is divided into Earth, Air, Water and Fire. The simple targeting system allows you to easily identify which type of magic will work against each type of monster.

WORTH PLAYING?

There's something truly satisfying about starting to play a game and finding that you're instantly able to grasp all the controls and immerse yourself deeply in the gameplay.

You'll find yourself spending many a pleasant hour cracking bones with axes, treading on rotting corpses and pushing the odd lever or five.

If you're in the mood for some gloomy, gothic action with precious little wear and tear on the brain then feel free to give *Warriors* a good seeing to. It's not the most original game in the world but it's got a whole load of hack and slash, it's lots of fun to play and that's the bottom line, 'cos we said so.



Sorting out your equipment and using the right combination of gear is paramount



Our hero sorts out this monster's particularly terrible case of bad breath



An impressive cast of evil villains and grotesque monsters blocks your path to glory. Take your sword to them all

computer and video
GAMES



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Duke Nukem: Planet of Babes (PSone), *Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain* (PSone, DC, PC)



COST: £29.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **NO**



A gaggle of goons wait for you in the corridor: Pop out, pop 'em and pop right back round the corner again



A well placed shot sends a guard flying into the wall



The graphics haven't come on much since the last one



Not much imagination has been put in here. It plays exactly like every other gun game

TIME CRISIS: PROJECT TITAN

Point, shoot, hide and get a sore arm. Ho-hum...

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LEE SKITRELL

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

In the world of action games, plots are irrelevant. Who cares if some idiot wants to blow up a boat/a building/the world? What does it matter if the president's daughter/wife/goldfish is being held for ransom? As long as there's muchos action and big explosions, everyone's happy. *Project Titan* knows this and delivers nothing but simple gun-toting arcade blaster.

BANG! BANG!

Anyone who's played earlier versions will know the score. You move a little way through the on-rails environment. You cap a bunch of bad guys. You take cover. You pop out and cap more bad guys. All of this caused a storm in the arcades the first time round but



This can only mean bad news. You can take several hits, thankfully



Hackneyed locations such as the classic warehouse battle are rife



Bang, bang, bang. That's gun games for you



You have to duck to avoid malicious scenery

playing with your G-Con gun at home several years later minus the groovy foot pedal of the arcade machines, it all seems rather flat.

POINT, SHOOT, YAWN

The best thing about the first PS1 *Time Crisis* was recreating the arcade experience, honing your shooting skills to use later down the seafront to impress the lasses. But without this thrill, players are left with an empty shell of a game where little effort has been spent on expanding on the 'point, shoot, hide' gameplay.

WORTH PLAYING?

The two modes on offer, Story and Time Attack both quickly become tedious and there isn't even a two-player game to extend the laughs.



In the boss battles you can choose where to hide



Cutscenes keep the plot boiling over

As ever with gun games, shooting up the punk soldiers and army types is scarily satisfying and can make even the most pacifist player feel like a bad-ass Mo Fo, but that won't be enough for most players. With pretty ghastly graphics, years' old gameplay and a lack of imagination, this is a decent rental title, but good for little else.

computer and video
GAMES



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Point Blank 3 (PS), *House Of The Dead 2* (DC), *Ghoul Panic* (PS)



COST: £59.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4

Conker had one hell of a day yesterday. He woke up in a bit of a two-and-eight after a right royal booze up. But by sunset he had been crowned King of the animals. And to prove it, he makes you play through some of the finest, sauciest platform action ever. Join the rudest red squirrel you'll ever meet on a journey through the worst hangover in history on this incredible adults-only adventure. You and your new furry buddy have to hop, skip and, er, pee your way to regal splendour. Along the way you'll meet angry Liverpuddlian dung beetles, squirty-bottomed cows and giant poo monsters in the most outrageous game ever made. More caviar?

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LEE SKITTELL

CONKER'S BAD FUR DAY

Violence, swearing and rudies aren't big or clever – unless you're playing *Conker's*

THEY CAN'T DO THAT!

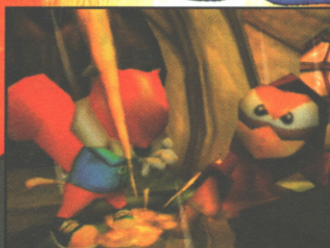
Even if you're familiar with Conker's antics you'll still be shocked by a lot of what the pesky red bugger gets up to. The game will be getting a 17+ rating and we reckon that's pretty generous. If you're under age, make sure your folks don't catch you playing as some of the content – though damn funny – is pretty rude.



Get tanked on hardcore ale and take a whizz on these annoying fire imps. For a little guy, Conker's sure got a big bladder...



This mass of meaty goop was once a pretty little moo cow and it's your fault she's in pieces. Not a game for the squeamish.



Conker does a lot of shucking up in the game. Usually it's plain old-fashioned alcohol abuse that causes the chinks to be blown.



It's a giant singing pool! Throw the bog rolls into his gunking mouth then flush that sucker down the pan. Can you get any grosser?

EVIL GENIUS

Like *Banjo-Toolie*, *Conker's BFD* is one of the best put together games you'll see and there are lovely little touches throughout. Musical themes subtly change as you hop and skip through the levels, drops of water (and less pleasant stuff) drip from Conker's fur when he's been swimming, and the game environments are the biggest we've ever seen on N64 without fogging.



Film references abound in *BFD* and this Terminator hay-stack dude is only the start of the film fun. Wait until you see the Matrix bit



Conker is one smooth squirrel and he changes costumes loads in the game. He gets this gas mask on when there's a stink around



Conker's story is fairly silly but it is told really well in superbly directed and voice-acted cutscenes. It's wickedly funny

GO ANYWHERE DO ANYTHING

Each sub section of the game – such as the poeey, windy, or spooky areas – blend into the main hub where you start, creating an incredible gaming environment. You can even look around you and see one area while in another. It works a treat.



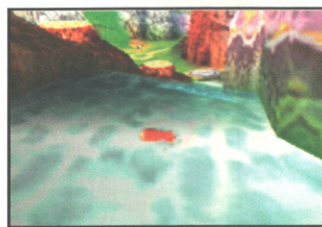
Here's the main area of the game from which all other zones are reached. Looks lovely don't it?



Head off to the left to get to poo mountain...



...which leads you out to this friendly area



Or make a bee-line for the wild river rapids...

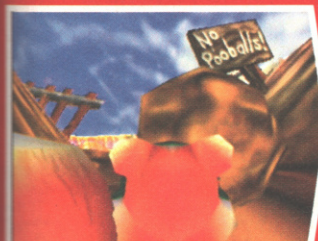


...for Jaws-style action in a water wonderland

INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE

HELP CONKER BECOME KING

Conker's BFD is twisted – and the game plays out a little differently from other platformers. Follow our advice to help Conker get the Crown.



No-one likes following rules. Ignore the sign and push the ball of poo off the ledge to give the baddie below a brown shower



More context-sensitive fun – very sensitive. Crush the boiler's knackers between the bricks and he'll be a soprano in no time



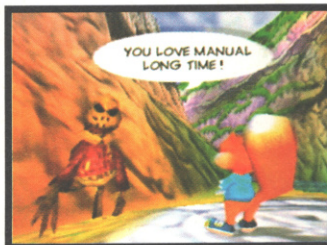
Chase down items by whacking them with Conker's frying pan. Listen out for hidden items and you'll do fine



Your reward for completing each challenge is usually some lovely cash and one of those excellent cutscenes

GIMME WHAT I NEED NOW!

When a lightbulb appears over your head it means you can do something special. It could be when you step on one of the many power-up pads dotted through the game, or it could be when you're next to an animal that you can take control of. Hit B when the bulb appears.



Here's Birdy! He'll help you out from time to time by explaining bits of the game to you including how the power-up pads work



Each pad gives you a different reward. Here you stand on a pad which gives you throwing knives to bring down the electrified cables in your way



Conker can even step on a pad to turn himself into a classic comedy anvil to drop down onto switches that he's not heavy enough to activate normally



Pressing B when next to certain animals like this buckin' bronco will let you take control of them. Just let the bulb be your guide

"Encounter such folk as gruff dung beetles, horny sunflowers and one-eyed sewer fish"

RARE TREATS

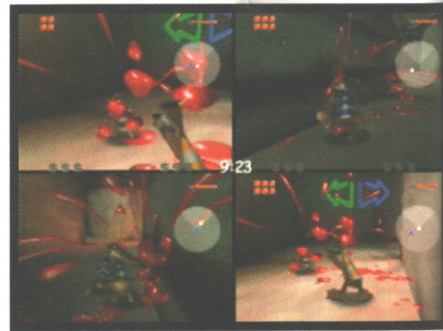
No Rare game would be complete without oodles of multiplayer games to play and *Conker's* are pretty damned fine. You can play by yourself and with friends, in teams or in all-out four-player war. The Race game is especially good and the team challenges offer something a bit different from regular deathmatching.



Racing is incredibly fast. Hold Z to accelerate and A to leap obstacles. You'll likely need a good few practice laps before you get used to the handling



Conker's BFD pokes fun at the D-Day Normandy Landings. It may be a bit tasteless but Beach is also *Conker's* best multiplayer team game. One team attacks while the other defends



Pure four-player joy in Heist. Make your weasel bag the booty then beat your rivals into a bloody pulp with a big stick when they try to steal it from you. Fantastic

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE TRY THESE...

Banjo-Toonie (NG4),
Zelda: Majora's Mask (NG4)

SWEARS AND NAUGHTIES

More cynical players might take a look at *Conker's BFD* and reckon that the swears and naughties are in the game to distract from the fact it's yet another Rare platformer. While it's true the game uses many of the standard 3D platformer clichés like hub levels and collectable treats, *Conker's* takes all of these par-for-the-course elements and shakes them up a bit. The result is another well-thought-out and highly polished Rare platformer, with plenty of new challenges even for *Banjo* veterans.

ONE-EYED SEWER FISH

There's a touch of RPG to the action too and Conker has to boogie around the levels meeting characters and help them out. Often as not, the solution to one person's problem will lead to more encounters with such folk as gruff dung beetles, horny sunflowers, and one-eyed sewer fish (don't worry - they are not as rude as their name sounds!). The game constantly spits out new challenges to throw you off-track and keep you busy. Like the stunning *Majora's Mask*, you'll need to be highly organised and have a

keen eye for clues and puzzles if you're going to succeed here. And though the level of challenge is extremely high in places, it never crosses over into outright unfairness, and persistence should always pay off.

WORTH PLAYING?

Smutty dialogue and questionable moral content aside, *Conker's BFD* is an incredible platformer. It's staggeringly well put together and shows what you can do with a little imagination and a dirty mind. The attempts at giving players a slightly different structure to work to and

the many context-sensitive touches work a treat and ensure there's room for both this and *Banjo's* sequel in your collection. Though it can be tough and may offend some with its bad taste gags, *Conker* comes highly recommended - if you can afford it, that is.



PC
ROM

COST: £29.99

OUT: MAY

MULTIPLAYER: 1-8 (ONLINE)



Aerial units make things more interesting



Each world has effects on the way you play



With a good enough PC, the battles can look absolutely blinding. Here, the infantry units duke it out on the front lines as the artillery ways in with support fire

Z: STEEL SOLDIERS

What Robot Wars should be

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: RICHIE SHOEMAKER

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Bitmap Brothers have released some of the finest games known to man. *Steel Soldiers*, sequel to 1996's *Z*, carries on that tradition and while it may not be entirely original, it's certainly a world apart from most RTS games. There's no resource collecting, nor are there any baffling tables at the back of a hideously overgrown manual to cross-reference. Not that you'd have time to. This is RTS with the emphasis on action.

THE FAST SHOW

At first sight *Steel Soldiers* appears a tad lightweight. Unlike, say, the *Command & Conquer* series, both sides have access to same units – land, sea and air – with which you must fight across maps set on six different worlds with differences that initially seem cosmetic only.

But it's the design of the units (and there are 30 in total), plus the maps themselves, that combine to create a sense of tension and pace that no other real-time strategy game can match. This is down, in part, to the way each map is

carved into territories. The more territories you control, the more credits you earn. So on each level it's imperative you take the fight to your opponent rather than sit back and wait for them to come to you.

INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Thanks to a 3D engine boasting spectacular explosions, clear and uncluttered maps and distinct units, the battles themselves are a visual feast. It's no less impressive on the ear, with humorous dialogue and wonderful ambient sounds specific to each world.

But it's the artificial intelligence that is the real star here. The enemy both attacks and defends in

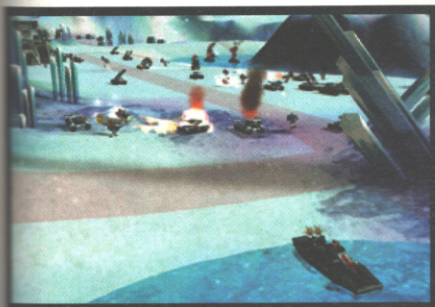
force, in places often that will leave you stunned. Like you, your enemy has simple aims – to take as much of the map as possible – and you'll find the balance of power shifting frequently as you struggle to find land to build on and the right mix of units to counter the foe.

WORTH PLAYING?

If you prefer your strategy to be more sedate, historically accurate and full of resource management, then look elsewhere. But if you like it fast and furious, you'll find *Steel Soldiers* a challenge that will entertain you on many levels from the single player campaign to the multiplayer mayhem.



Some lovely structures come under attack



Used wisely, sea units can turn the tide of any battle. Ahem



There's no resource management here, only white-knuckle action

computer and video
GAMES



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Ground Control (PC), Warzone
2100 (PC, PS)



COST: £39.99

OUT: APR 29

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2

DAYTONA USA 2001

The racer that's got more in common with *Gradius* than *Gran Turismo*. Awesome

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: EL BELÉ



Ordinarily, a perfect conversion of a six-year-old arcade game wouldn't be exciting enough to send a person running out into the street naked, shrieking like a startled chicken. But the fact that I'm writing this review from a padded cell should tell you *Daytona USA 2001* is an exceptional case. If you played *Daytona* in the arcades, you'll find it hard to contain yourself: this is everything that made the arcade game great, and a bit more.

SETTLE THE FLAW

Daytona is a fabulous conversion of one of the finest arcade racers in history. The lack of netplay is a sledgehammer blow to the PAL release, but the rest of the game's 'flaws' are pretty subjective. Some people will scoff as the crazy Japanese vocalist croons 'DAYTOOONNAAA! LET'S GO AWWAAAY!', but for fans it's part of the game's nutty charm.



Thought *Ridge Racer* was slidey? You ain't seen nothing until you've seen the power slides in here



Play this, then play *Gran Turismo*. Couldn't be more different. They barely belong in the same genre



Tweak the analogue settings for the right feel with a pad. With a steering wheel? Arcade perfection



One serious mess up costs you the race. *Daytona* might not be a sim, but it's hardcore as hell

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Ridge Racer (PS2), *Ridge Racer Type 4* (PSone), *Metropolis Street Racer* (DC)

SEE THE SIGHTS

The original *Daytona* arcade game only had three tracks, with another two in the Championship Edition. The DC game is like a greatest hits package. It rounds up those five, and adds another three of its own. All of them are exquisitely designed, and Sega fans will get a kick spotting characters they know trackside.



Sonic T Hedgehog. Etched in to the rock. Cool



A familiar figure stands near the Virtua Inn



Looks wise, *Daytona's* great. It's quick, smooth and there's not a bit of pop-up to distract you. Race from the cockpit view and you can really appreciate the width of the track



Mermaid Lake and its velodrome-style curve



The all-new Rin Rin Rink. An evil course to race

OVER THE LIMIT

Though *Daytona* certainly features a lot of cars it would perhaps be pushing the boat out a little to call it a driving sim. *Daytona* is pure arcade excess: it's all about reactions, putting yourself right on the edge to see how long you can take it. You start at the back of the grid with 39 cars roaring away in front of you. It's seriously intense.



Daytona cars are crap at going round corners. Mastering the powerslide is essential – think *Ridge Racer*, not *Gran Turismo*



Blasting round the track, you're constantly on edge – dodging cars like you do bullets in a shoot 'em up. Check out the traffic radar



The Indy Car-style race at Circuit Pixie is an immense rush. Dodge like hell, full throttle all the way. If you brake, you're lost

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Ridge Racer V (PS2), *Ridge Racer Type 4* (PSone), *Metropolis Street Racer* (DC)

DAYTONA'S COMING HOME

The world finally gets the home version of *Daytona* it deserves after six years of asking. Lack of netplay for our version strips this of its fifth star, because we know how much more awesome it could have been. Control issues with the pad might scare off casual players, but if any game ever rewarded a steering wheel it's this: you virtually get the arcade machine for your house. OK, so it takes a while to get into the *Daytona* way of playing, which is why some players hated the arcade game. But persevere and the rewards are enormous.

FORTY CAR RACING

This being an arcade port, you can't expect *GT* levels of depth. Beating it takes time though, and there are a handful of secret cars to unlock. The eight tracks are all properly reversed and mirrored, with sign posts replaced to make them instantly playable. So it's not like *Ridge Racer*, where you're constantly bouncing off walls 'cos the chevrons point out of corners, instead of into them. Racing 39 cars on the same track is a unique experience, and the game engine does a fantastic job not to choke when the action heats up.

FULL-ON ARCADE ACTION

Are you ready to strap yourself in and thrash around until your eyes dry up? Don't take *Daytona* lightly: you need fearsome reactions and skill to be the daddy at this game. It's all fast, noisy action – the way a videogame should be. *Daytona* doesn't have rear-view mirrors – you get a radar with dots chaotically dancing across it to represent the rival cars. This is not your average racing game by any means, and the skills you need to succeed are comparable to those in a manic shoot 'em up. Dodge like a maniac, and just hope you can stay 'in the

zone' for the whole race so you can cross the line first. Even over two laps it's a tall order, but over forty? Hardcore is not the word. The loss of the online play is a blow, but you simply must play *Daytona USA 2001*. Just don't go thinking this is anything like *Gran Turismo*, because you'll get a nasty shock.



PC
CD
ROM

COST: £29.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-16 (ONLINE)



Satisfyingly large gobbets of gore play a role



You can play four-player all on the same keyboard



Give it to 'em – it can look pretty smart at times

SERIOUS SAM

It sure ain't serious but at least there's a Sam in it

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: PERNICIOUS PETE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

They say: *Doom* action meets *Duke* wisecracks. We say: Yes, but five years too late.

Relentless blast-fest (first or third person – it's up to you) that throws a seemingly never-ending stream of bad guys at you 'til your eyes bleed and your reflexes are permanently disabled. And that's Normal mode.

BEEN THERE, SEEN THAT

Like sucking in the stale smells of your living room the morning after a party, *Serious Sam* whiffs of past pleasures now turned sour.

Visually, you can't complain – loads of ejecting brass, dozens of

monsters bouncing over the screen, lens flare and some large, good looking levels, all fairly free of slow-down on an above-average PC.

But after about two minutes of play you realise you've been here before. Monsters charging you from all sides, switches to hit, secrets to uncover, assorted pick-ups and weapons triggering fresh waves of increasingly large bad guys. All punctuated with the odd puzzle and titanic boss.

WORTH PLAYING?

If you loved the non-stop mindless action of *Doom* and are the master of strafe and fast reactions, you



The carnage is fun for a while but is little more than a nostalgia trip

may find yourself drawn in for a few hours and some nice touches like four-way, split-screen co-op add a little longevity.

But for the rest of the world there's little new on offer here in the way of gameplay. Shame.

computer and video
Games



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...
Doom (PC/PS/SNES/N64)

PC
CD
ROM

COST: £34.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-8 (ONLINE)

STAR TREK AWAY TEAM

Set phasers on fun for this tactical Trek

WORDS: SUE SKITTELL
SCREENSHOTS: ACTIVISION

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Romulans are somehow corrupting the minds of Federation members across the galaxy with a sinister new weapon and, judging from his Romulan hair, we reckon they've already got to CVG's Pat Garratt.

It's up to your crazy strategising skills to command Federation away teams and find out just what the Tribble's going on.

MAKE IT SO

Commandos comparisons are unavoidable and the good news is *Away Team* stands up to them rather well. Start by selecting officers with the required skills for each mission then beam down to planet surfaces and other space craft, piecing together the mystery and avoiding getting spotted.

There are loads of individual skills to play around with from healing party members to hacking



Everything is sharply drawn but all those greys and greens can end up looking a little drab. It's faithful to the show, though



Using team members' skills to their utmost is vital for success

computers and there's enough variety in the missions to send your brain cells into warp drive.

WORTH PLAYING?

Away Team is damned-near essential for Trekkers as it gives fans the chance to get fully involved in a superbly crafted Trek plot and command your way to victory.

For non-fans though, the appeal wanes a little. It's every bit as engaging and complex as *Commandos* but doesn't push the boundaries of the genre as much as the recent *Desperados* does, nor will the muddy graphics provide any sort of eye candy. We love Star Trek so we love this, but non-fans won't be so enthralled.

computer and video
Games



IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Commandos (PC), *Desperados* (PC), *Star Trek Conquest* (PC)



Romulans are the chief bad guys here



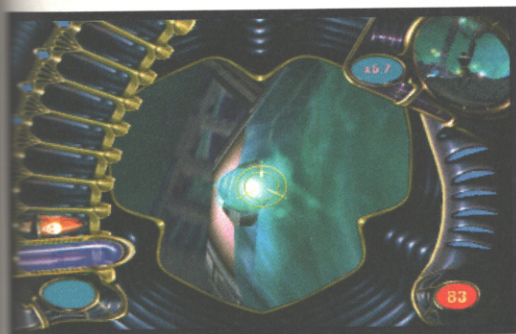
Combat can be a little hit-and-miss

PS2

COST: £39.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: NO

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS:
LEE SKITTRELL



MDK2: ARMAGEDDON

And lo! Five months after launch the good PS2 games began to appear...



Kurt can use his sci-fi parachute to hover around the gorgeous levels. Open the chute over an air vent to fly up high

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The world is in danger again and it's up to Max, Doc and Kurt to take out the alien trash. Play as three separate heroes in high speed shoot-outs, head-scratching puzzle sections and darkly comic platforming fun. *MDK2* is a new version of the DC and PC game and has been tweaked to provide a better of a gaming experience for action-starved PS2 owners.

BETTER THAN BEFORE

The original *MDK2* was a cracking game let down by fist-eatingly frustrating precision jumping sections and a brick-wall learning curve. Thankfully this version is far more balanced with a choice of difficulty settings and customisable controls so players can really get stuck in and trounce the bad guys. The graphics are still gorgeous but textures aren't quite as lush as



Pick-ups litter the levels and you'll love 'em

before, though the increased speed of the action and the smoothness of it all more than makes up for it.

THREE BECOME ONE

Each of the three characters' sections requires different kinds of gameplaying skills to get through. Max, the multi-limbed mutt is interested only in shooting and leaping around like a maniac. Kurt gets to do some sexy sniping and the Doc can collect, combine and use objects to solve puzzles. They are all cool, and playing as different blokes changes the pace nicely.

WORTH PLAYING?

This is a classy, beautifully produced game that will deliver a much-needed hit for adrenaline junkies. It makes us rub our thighs with delight that the annoying bits of the original have been fixed, making *MDK2* far more than just another PS2 rehash. Though it may just be a conversion of an old game and is still unlikely to appeal to more cerebral folk, most other players looking for some action will adore this high-tech, high-speed number.

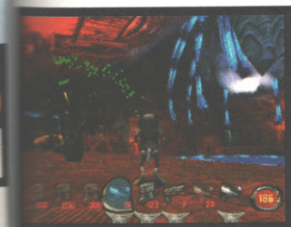
computer and video
GAMES



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...
Jet Force Gemini (N64),
Evolve (PC)



This section was a nightmare on DC but it's made a little simpler for PS2 idiots



Max can handle four guns at once, meaning plenty of green alien blood is spilled



When battling alien muthas, a handy green bar tells you how close they are to dying. This guy needs more work



COST: £39.99

OUT: APR

MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

SKIES OF ARCADIA

20,000 leagues *above* the sea

Let us take you on a journey to a world of fantastical islands floating in the sky. A world where people travel on majestic aerial galleons. A beautiful scene spoiled only by the presence of the evil Valuan empire. Enter Vyse and Aika, a pair of benevolent space pirates who attempt to hijack a Valuan vessel. During the heist, they rescue a beautiful girl, Fina, who has been kidnapped by the empire. And so it begins...

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: JOHNNY MINKLEY

AVAST, ME 'EARTIES!

The heroes of the game belong to a group of pirates known as the Blue Rogues. Contrary to the popular image of pirates as ruthless – if comically hirsute – villains, the Blue Rogues operate on a magnanimous, Robin Hood-esque level, robbing from the rich to give to the poor. Warms your cockles, doesn't it?



Vyse is the hero of the game. He's a bold, fearless and head-strong guy, intent on travelling beyond the edge of the world and thwarting the Valuan Empire. Not ambitious at all, then



Aika is Vyse's female companion throughout the adventure, and is an aggressive, assertive warrior. Though she may look sweet as Haagen Daaz, she can more than look after herself in a fight



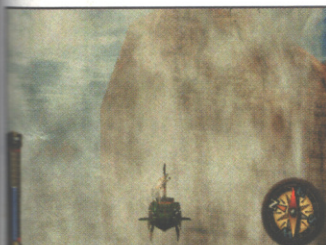
Vyse's father is a nice geezer but the epitome of discipline and military order, something Vyse struggles to live up to. A tragedy strikes Captain Dyne early on. Nice gloves

SAIL THE SEVEN SKIES

You travel on various flying ships. These sections offer a glimpse of the incredible scale of the game and there's always a chance of making a discovery of some sort.



Control your craft using the analogue stick and use the trigger buttons to adjust your altitude. It's not the best-looking aspect of the game



Keep away from strong air currents, as these can drag your ship down, causing untold damage. These sections are free-roaming to a degree



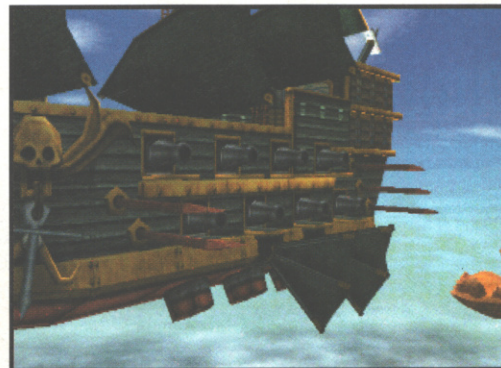
When you approach a landmass from the air, in order to dock you must fly in close and tap the A button. It's not so tricky

YOU COMPLETE ANCHOR

When two ships square up to each other in the sky, the battles are titanic as canons flare and decks splinter. A welcome change to battling groups of monsters.



Engage another ship and a grid pops up to allow you to plan your attack in advance. Choose which cannons to fire as well as your defensive strategy



Once you've inputted the moves, sit back and watch the guns blaze as the brutal struggle is played out in front of your very eyes

BATTLE ROYALE

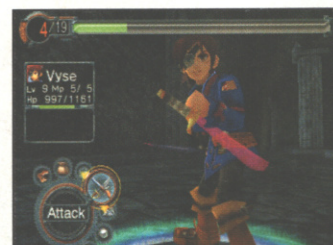
The battle system in *SoA* is relatively simple compared to the depth found in the likes of *Grandia 2* and the *Final Fantasy* games. A few neat twists manage to keep things interesting by requiring use of the ol' grey matter.



The spirit bar at the top of the screen depletes every time you use a special attack or magic spell. This bar gets replenished slightly after each round. You can only use your standard moves when it's empty



Use Focus to give your spirit bar an extra boost



Your weapons are colour-coded depending on which magic you cast on them

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Grandia 2 (DC), *Final Fantasy IX* (PS), *Zelda: Majora's Mask* (N64)

CASTLES IN THE AIR

The DC has played host to a limited number of serious turn-based RPGs. But things have changed for the better in recent months with the release of the excellent *Grandia 2*, and now *Skies of Arcadia*.

What struck us initially is the game's sheer scale. By approaching each island from the air you appreciate the incredible size and detail of the locations and you will encounter an enormous number of varied worlds in your quest.

NO TWO THINGS THE SAME

Much attention and imagination has clearly been injected into *SoA* and it has a unique and distinctive look. You'll meet swathes of weird and wonderful people and creatures on your travels, and though character models are a little chunky, each one has its own individual appeal.

Characterisation is not quite so impressive however, and the frequently stale dialogue would have benefited enormously from some voice acting, as in *Grandia 2*.

ANY GOOD, THEN?

The combat feels a bit limited, especially after *Grandia 2*'s excellent system, though the Spirit Meter and the colour combinations are neat touches. The pace is slow too, beset by painful loading times and the boss battles take an age.

The sheer amount of random fights irritates like being stuck in a lift with Chris Evans, even with the cool flying battles. In spite of all this, get through the first few relatively dull hours and a truly epic, magical

quest will present itself. If you have the patience to persevere with the niggles, you'll be rewarded. There's a good 40 plus hours of gameplay here, and the urge to explore the skies is a strong one.





COST: £39.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: NO

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Darius is hardly the greatest name for a gaming hero, conjuring up unfortunate images of Popstars rejects. His female counterpart Sharline, is hampered by an equally uninspiring moniker.

What's in a name? Where *Evergrace* is concerned, everything. These two blandly named characters live in a land called Edinberry where they are cursed due to the Crest mark they bear on their hands. Their aim in life is to find out the true meaning behind the tragedy in their lives which has resulted from their strange markings. Alrighty then.

GRACE-LESS

You play as either Sharline or Darius but you can switch between them during the game.

Both characters experience different adventures, though there is scope for them to meet up at certain points. Think *Resident Evil 2*, only without most of the playability or excitement.

COMBAT UNFRIENDLY

Gameplay involves wandering around talking to the odd stranger and killing the occasional creature. You do come across some minor



There're is a menagerie of beasts facing you, though most of them are a tad dull and insipid. The combat is dull and far too over-complicated though



You have to wait for your Palmira Action to power up in between turns which gives Mr Baddie plenty of time to whack you. No hum

EVERGRACE

Not so much RPG as Aaargghhhh-PG

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: MAURA SUTTON

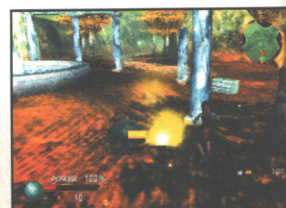


There are far better RPGs out there

quests to solve but they seldom raise your pulse and are usually mundane tasks such as finding jewels in birds' nests to reveal a bridge, and there are also boss battles with enormous Golems, winged Demons other assorted horrendous monstrosities.



Darius realised the pumpkin head was a poor fashion choice



Combat is more complicated than it needed



These ornaments deserve closer inspection



You spend a while chatting to the odd character you come across. Not exactly a whole barrel of laughs

The battles are needlessly complicated, revolving around the ridiculously named Palmira Action system, where weapons and items are imbued with special magic powers. Alternatively you can simply bash things with your magic-less sword or mallet in an effort to ward off frustration.

WORTH PLAYING?

Honestly, don't bother. There are plenty of better RPGs than *Evergrace* on the PS2 and PSone, and it's hard to see what even the most rabid of RPG freaks would find



Graphically it's really no oil painting



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...
Summoner (PS2)

SIMPSONS WRESTLING

It's the first Simpsons game in ages. Guess what, it blows!

REVIEWS

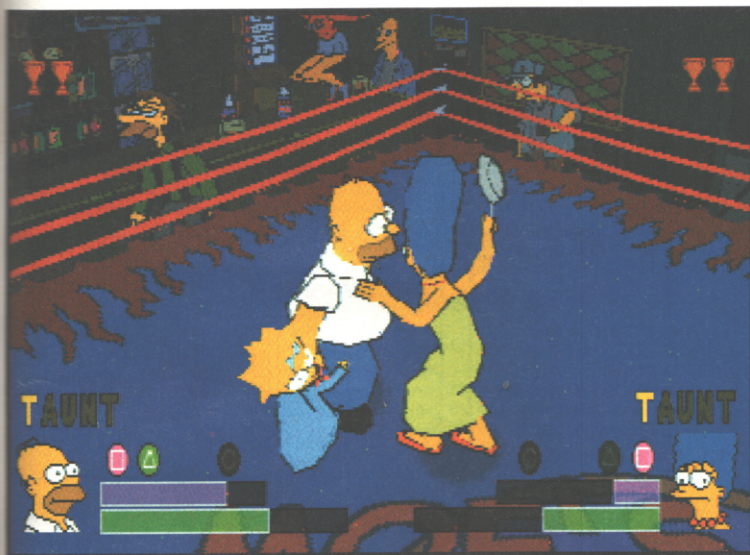


COST: £19.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LEE SKITTELL



These screenshots are enough to make Simpsons fans desperate to play this but trust us – it's nigh on unplayable

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Everyone loves The Simpsons, and a not inconsiderable proportion of you gamesplaying guys and gals love wrestling. So you'd think that by putting the two together you'd end up with something pretty darned special, yes? No. *Simpsons Wrestling* is mostly weak.

DOH!

The problem with *SW* is that while the brilliant humour of the TV show is there in spades, the all-important gameplay isn't. You *WILL* laugh at the taunts and authentic voice samples, you *WILL* grin when Barney uses his belch attack or Marge batters Lisa with her extendo-hair, and you're certain to watch out for all the little Simpsons references in the backgrounds when watching your mates bash each other up.

But all of these joys are short-lived when you discover five-minutes in that you're playing the kind of sub-standard pap that probably shouldn't have made it past the test stage of development.

OH MERCY!

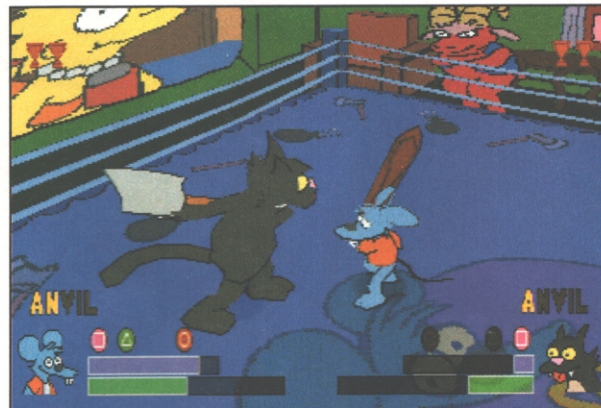
Aside from the pin moves and the arenas, this is wrestling in name



All the Simpsons' details are spot on. Krusty's voiceovers are class



The mighty Kang proves no match for The Bumble Bee Man



Itchy and Scratchy get savage. It's a top laugh at first, but there's virtually no gameplay



Groundskeeper Willie's rake sees off Apu



Smithers puts Mo down for the count

only and you're not going to find a *SmackDown!*-esque level of moves and combos on offer here. Instead, playing through a match is more like playing some kind of free-form, power-up littered 3D beat 'em up such as *Power Stone*, only nowhere near as much fun as it should be given the licence.

A bar above your health gauge shows when you can use one of your three attacks, with the strongest move needing the most time to charge up. It's a nice idea but the dodgy animations and frustrating collision detection give

the brawling a sloppy, very-nearly unplayable, feel.

WORTH PLAYING?

Simpsons Wrestling is one of the most disappointing wastes of an licence we've ever seen. If it wasn't for the humour and the moderately more playable two-player mode, this would be in gaming's Hall of Shame.

There's little to recommend to even the most hardcore Simpsons or wrestling fan and, while it may be only twenty quid, most players will probably wish they'd spent it getting the new series on video.



Ned gets laid out by Frink's ray gun

computer and video
Games



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

SmackDown! 2 (PS), *Virtual Springfield* (PC), *Power Stone 2* (DC)



ROGUE SPEAR



£29.99

OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

This strategy shooter's been out on PC for ages and now finally gets to DC. Plan your mission, tell your men where to go and then take part in the shoot-out to rescue hostages and take down terrorists.

Multiplayer lets up to four players engage in gunplay – but it's slow and clumsy.

WORTH PLAYING?

Planning out later missions takes forever and one mistake on your part when you're fighting will end your plans prematurely. *Rogue Spear* gets caught in no man's land, the shoot 'em up elements being done better by *Quake* and the strategy stuff better in *Hidden & Dangerous* – so whichever part you like, you'd best go for one of those titles instead.

★★



THIEF 2



£9.99

OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

If you thought *Metal Gear* was a stealth 'em up, wait until you get a load of this. Creep through the shadows, using light and sound to detect guards who are out to stop you nicking stuff as part of your missions. Amazing guard AI and spooky sound effects create a tense atmosphere to keep you on the edge of your seat.

WORTH PLAYING?

It's tough, but the rewards are there if you're good enough to reach them. It's a thinking man's first-person shooter. Think *AvP* meets *Metal Gear* with a lot of *Deus Ex* thrown in and you're starting to get close to *Thief 2*. Didn't do as well as it deserved at full price. Now there's no excuse not to own it.

★★★★



ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT



£39.99

OUT MAY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Konami try to do ice-hockey, but unfortunately end up flat on their faces. *ESPN* is a fairly run-of-the-mill sports sim, with the same old options and features. The official licence at least ensures a fine selection of famous players and their respective teams.

WORTH PLAYING?

You can't fault the presentation, as everything looks and sounds pretty sweet, although some of the animations are a little ropey at times. The problem lies in the gameplay, and it just proves too frustrating to play. Yes, you can pull off some swanky moves, but trying to score is a real pain in the arse and it's just too painful an experience.

★★



£39.99

OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Watching a video of real Kengo martial artists would probably last longer than your interest in this game. Waving bits of metal around isn't pushing gameplay to its limits, and while the same could be said for fist-based fighting games, at least all the moves in those do something different. Plus they have a sense of excitement – something sadly lacking here.

WORTH PLAYING?

As a fighting game? No. As a sword fighting game? Still no. With gameplay that always comes down to random button-bashing (which means no matter how much time you spend learning all the moves you'll still find that a novice can cane your ass just by mashing his pad), what's the point?

★★



LEGO ISLANDS 2



£19.99

OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Firstly, it needs to be pointed out that this game is specifically aimed at six to 12 year-olds. In other words, if you exist outside the upper end of this age bracket, avoid like a rabid rottweiler. Though the prospect of a Lego game may fill you with dread, for the kiddies, this really is actually pretty good stuff.

WORTH PLAYING?

Lego Islands 2 is a bright, colourful platform adventure that is surprisingly playable, and filled with a wide variety of mini-games and challenges to keep the little nippers amused. It ain't exactly *Metal Gear Solid 2*, but then it doesn't pretend to be. Your little brother may well lap this up.

★★★★



PIPE MANIA 3D



£9.99

OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Pipe Mania 3D is the latest in a long, long line of *Pipe Mania* games that stretches right back into the dark annals of gaming history. The apparent twist this time is the '3D' in the title, which means – rather revolutionarily – that the grid is tilted into a pseudo-3D playing field.

WORTH PLAYING?

Pipe Mania has always been about classic puzzling action, but the concept is showing its age now. Versions of this game have been on countless formats, and despite the odd tweak, it's still much the same. That said, it is at a budget price and if you've never played it before, it's worth checking out. Please let this be the last, though.

★★

FINBALL WIZARD

A flippin' great fishy pinball game tops our trawl through this month's Game Boy catch

WORDS AND SCREENSHOTS: LEE SKITTRELL



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4 ALTERNATE

THE LITTLE MERMAID II - PINBALL FRENZY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Grab your snorkel and squeeze into your wetsuit for more handheld pinball delights to keep your flippers twitching and your Game Boy a-rumblin'. Believe it or not, *The Little Mermaid II - Pinball Frenzy* is a thrill-a-second title that challenges even the incredible *Pokémon Pinball* for the number one position as top handheld ball-buster. There are two tables, mini-games galore, rumble-goodness and even four-player action all jammed in.

SPINNING AROUND

Anyone who's played *Pokémon Pinball* will be instantly at home with *Mermaid*. Players wanting even

more of a challenge will be rubbing their ball-bearings with glee as the game features even more detailed tables than *Pikachu's* game, and *Pokémon Pinball* tactics, such as tilting the table, also play a part here. Just like before there are two different tables and multiple mini-games to find.

HARDCORE CUTIE

Mermaid is much more than a repackaged *Pokémon Pinball* though. For a start the game features a four-player mode where budding pinball wizards take it in turns to get the highest scores, plus you can choose to play the wicked mini-games once you unlock 'em from the title screen. *Mermaid* also offers different ball speeds for novice or expert players along with a range of special features, ball bonuses and game challenges that will take you ages to get your head

round, let alone master. It may be cute, but it's wickedly hardcore.

WORTH PLAYING?

The Little Mermaid licence is not cool. In fact, some might say it sucks out loud. But when the pinball action is as addictive, inventive and as challenging as this what does it matter? The two feature-packed tables will keep you hooked and there are so many different puzzles and challenges in store that you're likely to find some new bonus round or tasty-trick even after months of play. This proves that it certainly is better down where it's wetter.

computer and video
Games





COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

DUKES OF HAZZARD: RACING FOR HOME

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

This wicked little GB mission-based racer could prove Hazzard-ous to

your health. Take to the dirt tracks of Hazzard county in the Duke brothers' beloved General Lee, as they try to save their farm from going under, solving a pretty cool mystery along the way.

ON A MISSION

The main game in *Dukes* is made up of Driver-style missions ranging from chasing bank robbers to avoiding the wailing sirens of Sheriff Rosco P. Coltrane. The action is fast-paced and the General Lee handles superbly. There's the option to play through a series of races and even to try to beat your best times on the missions you've already cleared.

WORTH PLAYING?

You might not remember or even care about the Dukes, but that shouldn't stop you enjoying this pukka petit adventure. It's a welcome change from the sub-standard kart-racers and unoriginal platform games that dog GBC and well worth checking out.

computer and video
Games



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **1-2 LINK UP**

THE LION KING 2

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Another month, another Disney platformer. This time Simba and chums from *The Lion King* go on a jungle rampage. With events taken from the first movie and the straight-to-video sequel, there's at least plenty

to do in the game and there are a bunch of decent mini-games to play with a buddy via a link cable.

FLOOD GATES

The platforming action harks back to the glory days of Mega Drive platformers, but handheld players have been flooded with this type of action game for so long that most will want to steer well clear. Unless you're a younger player the four mini-games will probably hold your attention far longer than the main game but even so you'll tire of the whole thing pretty quickly.

WORTH PLAYING?

There are a bunch of stand-out GB platformers around but *Lion King 2* won't be joining them on their lofty cloud in Games Heaven. While it's not awful, there are better platformers for you to play than this and you'll only really get off on *Lion King 2* if a) you love all things *Lion King* and b) you haven't played many platformers in your life. Yes to both anyone?

computer and video
Games



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **1-2 LINK UP**

LEGEND OF THE RIVER KING 2

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

River King 2 is another one of those odd RPG/sim hybrids from the *Harvest Moon* stable that makes a lot less sense on paper

than it does on your GBA. Catch fish, help the mad folk of the town and appease the river gods to save the world!

WHAT SANITY?

Okay, so it's an odd little game, but it's also pretty good. Fishing plays a major part in the action, but there are also vicious turn based battles with wild animals and there are loads of people to help in true RPG style. Sometimes it moves a bit slow but the game's weird charm makes up for it.

WORTH PLAYING?

There's an excellent feature in the game that lets you trade rare items between *River King 2* and *Harvest Moon 2*, and the two games will sit quite happily next to each other in your collection.

While being more instantly accessible, *RK2* doesn't quite have the lasting appeal or depth of the glorious farming action of *HM2* but you should check this out if you want something very different and pretty cool.

computer and video
Games



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

INDIANA JONES AND THE INFERNAL MACHINE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Whip crack your way through a world of tricks, traps and tomb-related terror. Where GB *Tomb*

Raider opted for 2D larks, *Infernal Machine* takes a bizarre, pseudo 3D top-down view that will cause you as many headaches as those damn Russians you have to whup.

INFERNAL BLEEDING

Indy's certainly got the moves and he can run, jump, climb and use all manner of useful items to help solve the various puzzles he'll face. This is a game that will severely test your logic skills as well as your patience. Most of the puzzles involve navigating yourself around the levels without getting shot, squished or falling to your doom, and it would be fun if not for the awkward viewpoint.

WORTH PLAYING?

There's some good stuff in *Indy*, like the numerous puzzles and deadly weapons, but most of the time you'll be screaming with rage at the awkward combat and the fall-too-far-and-you-die syndrome that plagues the entire game. It's too hard, too fiddly and, ultimately, not at all fun.

computer and video
Games





COST: £44.99
OUT: APRIL

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4



Operation Winback hit the N64 earlier last year. Though it was a solid actioner, it didn't seem to go down too well with all those Pokémaniacs and Mario fans, and kind of stuttered into obscurity. Shame, really. But someone has seen fit to dust it down, give it a lick of paint and see if PS2 players might take to it better than their N64 counterparts. We won't bore you with the plot again. Just add some words to these: Terrorists, hijack, military complex, threat to the world. Enough? And before we go any further, word of warning to N64 players - this is no *Winback 2*, it's the same game tarted up for the more powerful platform, so you may have seen it all before.

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: STEVE O'HAGAN

OPERATION WINBACK

Limited N64 blaster is back for more action on PS2

LOSE CONTROL

The first thing you'll notice when you step into Jean-Luc's hobnailed, terrorist ass-kicking boots are the tricky controls. It's got elements of *Syphon Filter* and *Metal Gear Solid* in there, though is not quite so streamlined as either. It's not that you need to tie your digits in knots to play it, it's just it never really feels very comfortable.



A vital part of the system is using Square to sidle up to walls so you can peek round the corner. You'll be doing this a lot



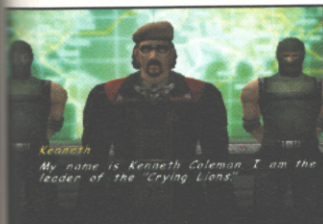
L1 makes you crouch and the right analogue stick lets you move the camera to any position to check out your surroundings



Holding R1 draws your weapon and locks onto the nearest target, much like *Res Evil* games. This means you can't move and shoot

FULL-ON SHOOTER

At first, *Winback* has the appearance of a stealth 'em up. But scratch this covert surface and you soon realise the game is basically a full-on actioner with more shooting than an entire season of Premier League football. It's a bloodthirsty wolf in a crafty, sneaking sheep's clothing.



You have to kill a guy called Kenneth. Ooh, scary



Training levels teach you to kill all that moves



The game is full of wanton carnage. Little stealth



Try one-player deathmatches against bots

HOW ARE WE LOOKING?

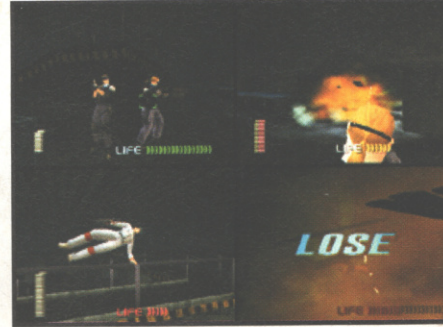
So there's not much new here over the N64 game, apart from an improved multiplayer game and those brushed up visuals. It may look tons better than its predecessor but you'd expect that on a next-gen machine, and while the whole package looks pretty neat and tidy, you have to say it's fairly uninspiring.



The locations are fairly drab, if consistent with a military facility. The whole game takes place on the same base. Hmm



You bump into fellow agents during the mission and cut-scenes using game engine graphics keep you up to speed. Nothing special



The fact it runs pretty smooth in multiplayer is a plus, but four-way split-screen ain't exactly the sweetest eyecandy

FIGHTING TALK

For a game that is virtually all about shooting, it's a shame they didn't come up with a combat system to get your blood pumping. As it is, while it has got some swish touches, like the way you have to use cover, it feels a bit constricted and sadly ends up making the battles a bit tedious.



Don't use cover and you'll be six feet under...



...but ultimately this becomes a bit tedious...



... as does the old 'hug the wall/object technique'



There are only five weapons to find. Not enough

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE TRY THESE...

Metal Gear Solid
(PSone, PC),
Syphon Filter 2 (PSone),
MDK2
(DC, PS2, PC)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Some games get ported to other platforms 'cos they sold like hot cakes and are guaranteed buck-makers when converted. Others, like *Winback*, may not have sold so well but were good games in their own right and deserve a second chance to shine on another console. But converting games from the ageing N64 to powerful platforms like the PS2 with only a minor cosmetic overhaul seems a bit lazy to us.

MULTIPLAYER

There are 30 odd levels to tackle, and it'll take a while as there's plenty of challenge. Too much so at times, as you'll start pulling your hair out having to restart from the last continue point over and over. At first, nipping in and out of cover is cool, but it soon becomes a bit repetitive. There is just no other way to play the game. The control system makes it impossible to move and fire, and you get slaughtered in a firefight as soon as you break

cover, so all you ever seem to do in the game is hide behind walls and crates, popping up to fire at opportune moments.

WORTH BUYING?

Multiplayer is a nice bonus. It's not going to make the likes of *Quake 3* or *TimeSplitters* take notice, but it's surprisingly good fun and full of options. You can bang a load of bots in there to fight on your tod as well, or play through a series of set challenges. But this simply isn't enough to make *Winback* a vital

purchase. It's a solid blast, and hasn't got all that much competition as yet on PS2, but we can only hope and pray that this standard of title isn't going to be the norm over the console's lifespan.



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EXCLUSIVE PLAYTEST

TRIBES 2

Quake was a battle. this is war!

REVEALED
UNREAL 2
A NEW REALITY

REVIEWED

SERIOUS SAM
F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP
FREEDOM: FIRST RESISTANCE
EVIL ISLANDS
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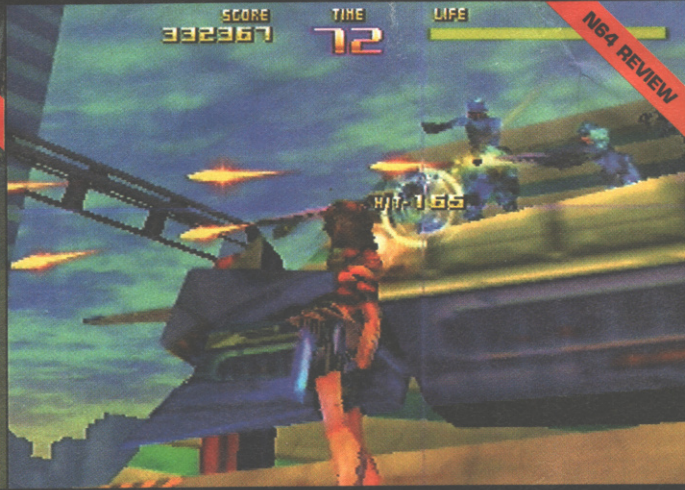
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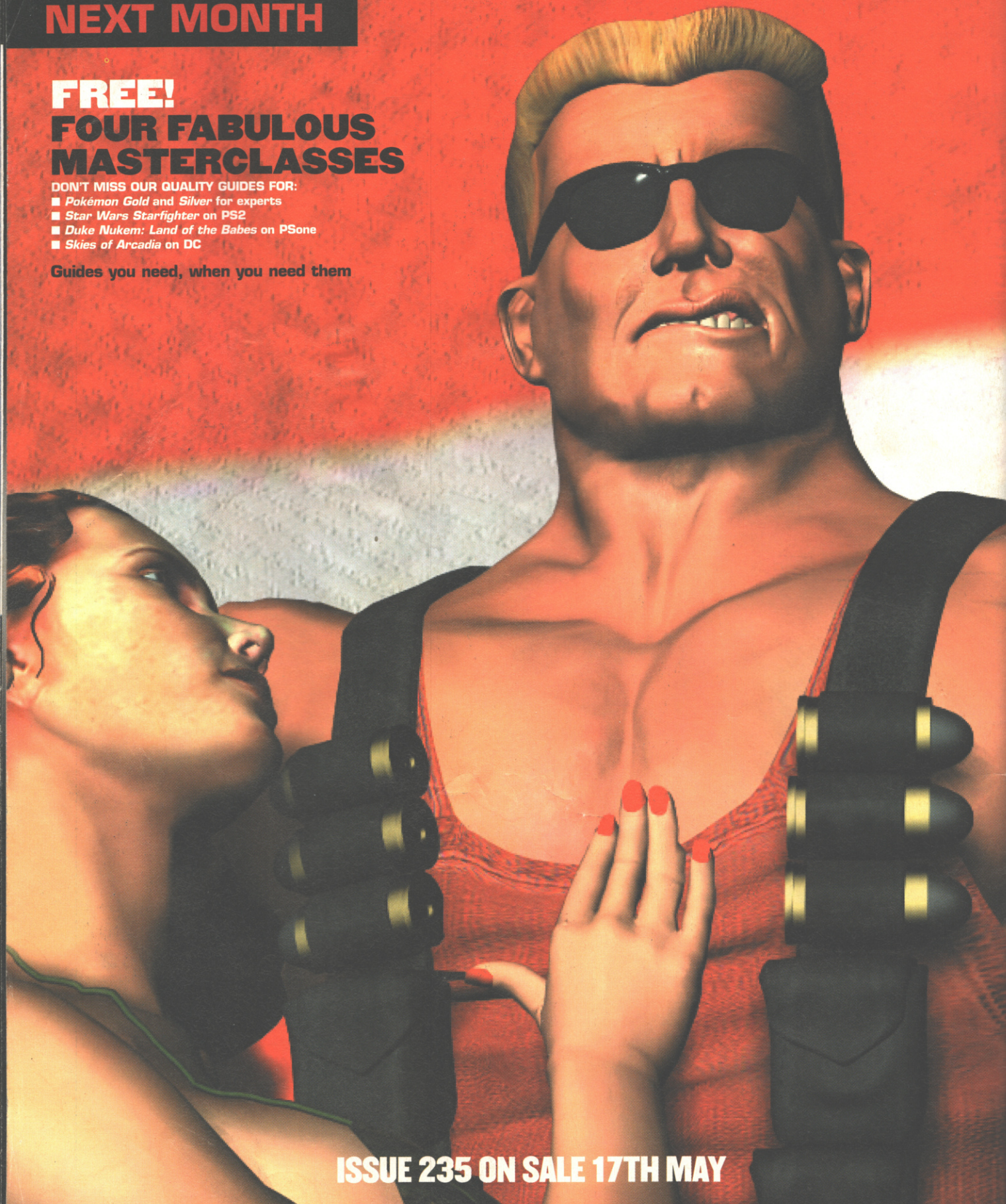
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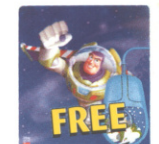
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